Malacañang puts on hold wide-ranging PNP revamp

Story on PAGE A2

Lawmaker scores NPA for extortion

By Carlito Pablo

A FORMER street parliamentarian, now a legislator, yesterday expressed concern over the alleged "harassment and extortion attempts" against party-list organizations by the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

LAWMAKER/ A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Peso recovers to 55.49 to $1 BUSINESS /B1
- Pinoy teenager slain in Canada racial violence NEWS /A4
- Ping hits anti-drug stickers NEWS /A3

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JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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NO FEAR. Anti-kidnapping task force chief Angelo Reyes (center), incoming NCRPO chief Recaredo de Leon and outgoing NCRPO chief Reynaldo Velasco assess situation as kidnappers strike anew in Metro Manila Tuesday. At right, pictures of the top 10 kidnap chieftains in the country with corresponding rewards for their capture, dead or alive.

Palace: No political deal in power hike

We're being fried in our own fat, says Pimentel

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG yesterday offered little hope that the order granting Manila Electric Co. a rate increase starting next month would be recalled as it denied allegations that the increase was part of a deal with the Lopezes to draft Sen. Noli de Castro as President Macapagal-Arroyo's running mate.

"The President will not make any deals and she will always take into consideration the public interest," her spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

A talent of ABS-CBN, De Castro has consistently topped surveys on possible vice presidential candidates. In exchange for De Castro agreeing to be her running mate, Ms Macapagal would allegedly help the Lopez firms Meralco, Maynilad Water Services and Benpres Holdings recover from their financial woes through Malacañang's intervention.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. alluded to the deal when he urged the Energy Regulatory Commission not to allow itself "to be an instrument of political expediency."

A top Lakas official, who asked not to be identified, said the 12-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour increase that the ERC granted Meralco was a sign that De Castro "is now in the bag."

But at his briefing, Bunye said the final decision on power rate increases rested with the ERC. "I believe we can always make our sentiments known to the ERC

PALACE/ A10

Kidnappers are getting bolder, grab kid in Munti

By Margaux Ortiz, Christian V. Esguerra and TJ Burgonio

IN YET another abduction, a 2-year-old boy was snatched by armed men early yesterday in Muntinlupa City, hours before the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktaf) and police chiefs met to discuss a beefed-up campaign to control the rise of kidnappings in Metro Manila.

"Well, they're getting bolder and bolder, so we will increase our efforts. We will have to react and respond proactively," Naktaf chief Angelo Reyes said at a press conference in Camp Aguinaldo.

Reyes declined to discuss the latest kidnapping, but said Naktaf personnel were "on alert" and "tracking" the case as well as that of a 10-year-old girl who was abducted on Nov. 21 near her school in Paco, Manila.

Agence France Presse said independent estimates showed an average of one kidnap victim every three days. *(See story on Page A10.)*

"This is a difficult job, no doubt about it," Reyes said. "We have kidnappers who are determined to take advantage of the situation."

Police said that at around 7:45 a.m., six armed men in an Isuzu Crosswind van blocked the Honda CRV carrying the boy near the exit of the Susana Heights subdivision at Barangay Tunasan in Muntinlupa. The plate number was reported variously as MEX-326 and WEX-326.

When driver Emilio Cosme and a maid refused to give up the boy, the armed

KIDNAPPERS/ A10

Customs, BIR men sell off luxury cars

By Armand N. Nocum

DO YOU hear that sound? It's the sound of luxury cars racing out of the driveways of customs and internal revenue officials under investigation. The toys for the big boys are reportedly being sold for a song, to escape official scrutiny.

But an unfazed Office of the Ombudsman warned public officials that the fire sale of questionable properties would not stop the agency from going after those who failed the lifestyle check.

"Even if they dispose of properties that were acquired through illegal sources, we can still trace their ownership through thorough investigation. Properties illegally acquired will be forfeited in favor of the state," said Assistant Ombudsman Ernesto Nocos, who also serves as the spokesperson of the antigraft office.

He was reacting to reports that Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue officials have started selling off their luxury vehicles, posh residential units and business firms after the government filed a series of graft cases against top officials—including two from the Department of Public Works

CUSTOMS/ A6

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VAL HANDUMON

WAR ON DRUGS
President Macapagal launches the Himagsikan Laban sa Droga, a campaign against illegal drugs, with a ceremonial texting at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila on Monday night.

Dinky: It's cool to play Scrooge to street kids

By Volt Contreras

'TIS the season to be generous, but hold those alms.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman has pronounced that it's cool for motorists, pedestrians, or owners of roadside establishments to play Scrooge to street children this Christmas.

Soliman called on the public to ignore street carolers particularly the urchins who do their thing in the middle of traffic jams. It is the government and civic organizations who will give them Christmas gifts right in their own communities, she said.

According to Soliman, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has tapped nongovernment and parish organizations in Metro Manila, Cavite and Bulacan to throw Christmas parties for the children and their families from Dec. 16 to Jan. 6 under the project "Paskuhan sa Pamilyang Pinoy."

"We're encouraging these kids to stay in their barangays, so don't give them the incentive to go caroling in the dangerous streets," Soliman said yesterday in an interview.

She said the DSWD had prepared gift

DINKY/ A6

Another hard-hitting broadcaster shot dead

By Ronnie Lorejo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Another broadcaster, known for his hard-hitting commentaries over Masbate province's lone radio station, was shot dead by two unidentified men yesterday morning.

Nelson V. Nadura, 42, a New People's Army (NPA) rebel returnee, was riding on his motorcycle on his way home when he was gunned down about 150 meters from radio station dyME in Masbate City.

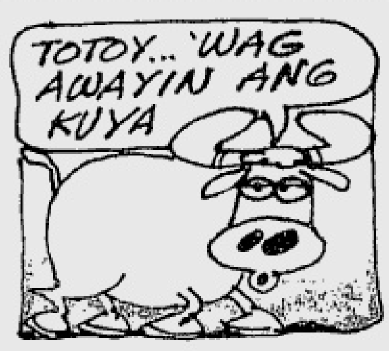
Nadura, president of the Union of Print and Broadcast Journalists of Masbate (UPBJM), was the 50th media person to be killed in the country since 1986, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP). INQUIRER records, however, showed he was the 73rd fatality.

Senior Supt. Romeo Mapalo, Masbate police director, said Nadura had just left the radio station after his regular 30-minute program, "Opinyon Publiko," that ended 8 a.m. when he was attacked by two men armed with .45 cal. pistols.

Mapalo said six empty shells and one slug were recovered at the crime scene.

Citing witnesses' accounts, police said the assailants fired successive shots at

ANOTHER/ A5



TOTOY... 'WAG AWAYIN ANG KUYA

President's men wage turf war

By Juliet L. Javellana

WHO says only the opposition has internal problems? The past two days, administration spokespersons have been busy sniping at each other.

A day after President Macapagal-Arroyo's new political and campaign spokesperson, Housing Secretary Mike Defensor, tried to put ruling Lakas party spokesperson Secretary Heherson Alvarez in his

PRESIDENT'S/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ARMIN ADINA, PDI RESEARCH/12/03/03

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	**Cebu**	Partly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with rains
Tagaytay	Partly cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with rains
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly cloudy
Calapan	Partly cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

Palace freezes PNP revamp

By Christian V. Esguerra

INTENSE lobbying by several influential police officials most affected by the top-to-bottom revamp at the Philippine National Police announced last Monday has prompted PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. to hold off change in 17 key positions.

At least two police officials close to President Macapagal-Arroyo reportedly ran to Malacañang to ask for a stay of their new appointments, a senior PNP official told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Malacañang is said to have immediately phoned Ebdane and ordered a freeze in all new positions, the source said.

The PNP announced on Monday it was implementing immediately a top-to-bottom revamp of the police organization in the face of a resurgent crime wave. The revamp was to affect 32 positions, it said.

Director Jose Lalisan, chief of the directorate for personnel records management, yesterday denied the reported lobbying by police officials close to Malacañang.

He said the freeze order involved only 12 positions and this was because either the positions involved were of a "sensitive" nature or some projects were still being completed.

But it later turned out that 17, not 12, positions were included in the hold order after outgoing PNP information officer, Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, sent out text messages that 15 units would have their turnover ceremonies today and Friday.

Some of the officials who were asked to remain in their current posts were Director Eduardo Matillano, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Civil Security Group director, and Director Rolando Garcia, chief of the directorate for investigation and detective management (DIDM).

In the Monday announcement, Matillano was replaced by Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao, outgoing chief of the directorate for intelligence, and was appointed new DIDM chief. Garcia was appointed chief of the Central Visayas command. Berroya, whose term had been extended by Malacañang by one year, was sacked.

At about 9 p.m. on Monday, the PNP public information office staged a "text marathon." It said there was no change in the positions for Region 10 (Northern Mindanao) director, legal services, and DIDM deputy chief.

Not until yesterday did the PNP venture to explain why.

The much-anticipated PNP revamp was "faulty" in the first place, according to the highly placed source.

Ebdane had bypassed the National Police Commission (Napolcom) and transmitted the list of new appointments straight to Malacañang for the President's approval, the source said.

Changes involving star-ranked positions have to pass through Napolcom which endorses the new appointments to the President, the source said.

"The announcement was not illegal, but premature," said Linda Malenab-Hornilla, Napolcom officer in charge who said she was not aware of the revamp until she read about it in the papers.

"There's nothing wrong with announcing the revamp details especially in cases of exigency, but their decision is still subject to our confirmation," Hornilla said.

She said the Napolcom commissioners have the power to deny some of the PNP recommendations "if they deem it fit."

Hornilla said the Napolcom will be holding an executive meeting today and expects the PNP to submit its recommendations on the proposed revamp. *With reports from Edson Castro Tandoc Jr., Margaux Ortiz, Metro and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Aglipay dared to tell all on Kuratong

By Tina Santos

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice yesterday challenged a ranking police official to reveal the true circumstances behind the killing of the 11 suspected Kuratong Baleleng gang members in the wee hours of the morning of May 18, 1995, claiming there was a clear whitewash in the investigation of the case.

At a press conference, DOJ undersecretary Jose Calida said Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, PNP chief for operations, "should come out and tell the truth" about what actually happened on that fateful day.

The 11 suspected members of the Kuratong Baleleng gang, a notorious bank robbery syndicate, were allegedly summarily executed along Commonwealth Ave. in Quezon City in the early morning of May 18,1995.

But opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the principal accused in the case, and 33 other police officials claimed the victims died in a shootout.

Calida noted that Aglipay was head of the PNP-Special Action Force when the incident occurred, adding that the team failed to submit an after-operation report on the raid on Superville Subdivision, Parañaque, where eight of the 11 gang members were arrested.

"That's the big question General Aglipay should answer, there is nothing in the records. All we want is for them to tell the truth," Calida said.

Aglipay, however, said that everything he knew about the case was all "hearsay."

He said he was attending a wedding somewhere in Metro Manila at the time of the raid. "God and fate was really on my side because I was not there," he told reporters yesterday. "I can look at anybody straight in the eye and tell him that I had nothing to do with the case."

Aglipay also explained that an after-operation report was prepared by the main operating unit, the defunct Anti-Bank Robbery Intelligence Task Group.

Calida said they also plan to file charges against Col. Benjamin Magalong, then battalion commander of the PNP-SAF, and Col. Samson Tucay, for obstruction of justice and falsification of documents.

Magalong and Tucay allegedly knew that Lacson forced some of the witnesses to make statements that no arrest was made at Superville.

Ysmael Yu, who led the arrests, had executed an affidavit claiming the Kuratong members were summarily executed. He also presented affidavits of four new witnesses -Police Senior Insp. Marlon Sapla, P02 Gerald Antolin, P03 Leonila Lanceta and SP01 Loreto Valle. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

PRESIDENTIAL aspirant Fernando Poe Jr. and wife Susan Roces share a solemn moment with former Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago during last night's *pasiyam* (the ninth-day novena) for Santiago's late son AR. Next to the former senator is Maribel Ongpin. ERNIE SARMIENTO

Political neophyte FPJ is on the go

FOR a political neophyte, Fernando Poe Jr. already knows who to see and where to be seen.

A veteran action star and now presidential aspirant showed up last night at the ninth day Novena (*pasiyam*) for the late son of former senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Poe's arrival and that of his blue-shirted supporters almost took away the solemnity of the rites in memory of Santiago's 22-year-old son, Alexander Robert or AR.

With about 50 members of FPJ for President Movement serving as his advance party, Poe arrived with actress-wife Susan Roces for the 6 p.m. service at the Santa Maria Delas Prada Parish on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City.

In an ambush interview with reporters on his way to the pew, Poe virtually conceded that he could not win election by popularity alone, saying "I cannot run as an independent."

But that's about the only definite reply he could give reporters regarding his next political moves.

He said he has not found yet a vice-presidential running mate. But when asked if he would consider Santiago, he just said: "I'm open to everybody. I need everybody's help and we need people like Senator Santiago."

This was after Santiago in an earlier TV interview before the service quipped: "The vice presidency isn't such a bad therapy for a mourning person."

But when interviewed later in front of Poe, a smiling Santiago said she was just "entertaining" herself to bear with the loss.

She said: "I don't really know if I'm serious. This is a sad occasion so I'm going to put some humor (in it)."

Also present in the service was former opposition Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, currently the head of the selection panel that will decide whether a United Opposition will choose Poe or Sen. Panfilo Lacson in 2004.

Lacson-Angara feud worsens

By Carlito Pablo

THE INFIGHTING within the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino between Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson has gone from bad to worse.

Two congressmen, identified with the Lacson faction, have demanded the resignation, if not outright expulsion, of party chair Angara.

In a letter to LDP secretary-general Rep. Agapito Aquino, Representatives Rolex Suplico and Abraham Mitra accused Angara of "disloyalty to the party, gross violation of the party constitution and other divisive acts inimical to the interest of the party and its members."

The two congressmen mainly faulted Angara for refusing to support the presidential bid of party member Lacson.

They said Angara had "repeatedly committed acts of disloyalty to the party by continuously endorsing and actively working for the selection of a non-party member over a party member [Lacson] as LDP standard-bearer for president."

Suplico and Mitra noted that Angara even earlier showed his preference for businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., another non-LDP member.

When he realized that Cojuangco was not interested in running for president, Angara "expressed his open endorsement and, in fact, continued to announce that the LDP would support actor Fernando Poe Jr.," they said.

Suplico and Mitra said that Angara's insistence on supporting a non-party member like Poe over Lacson was a "clear and patent disregard of his obligation of loyalty to the party." *With a report from Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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PALACE VISITOR
President Macapagal-Arroyo receives Bahrain's Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa during a courtesy call in Malacañang on Monday. The President thanked the Prime Minister for the Kingdom's support to boost development in Mindanao and to overseas Filipino workers. Bahrain hosts 35,000 OFWs. Also in photo are Executive Secretary Alberto P. Romulo and Special Envoy to the Gulf Cooperation Council R. Aguiluz V who accompanied the Prime Minister to Malacañang. MALACANANG PHOTO

ANTI-LACSON

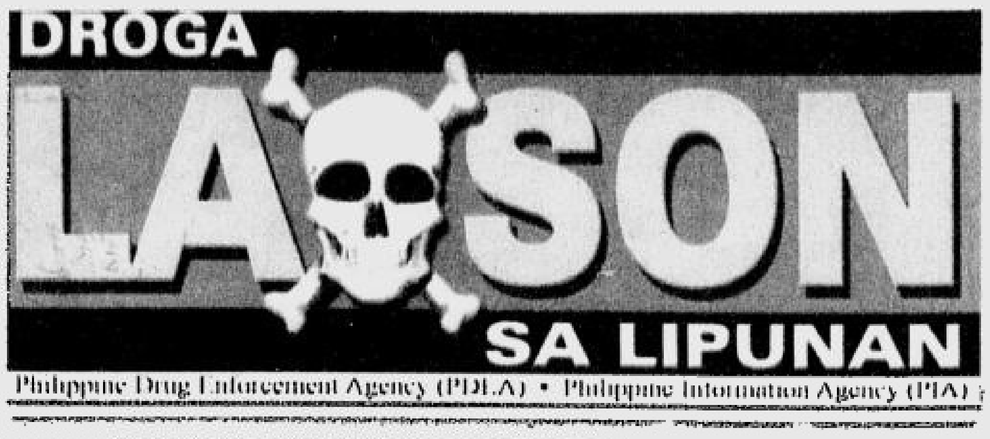
Ping hits anti-drug stickers

By Christine O. Avendaño

OPPOSITION Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday accused Malacañang of being behind the distribution of stickers ostensibly promoting the government's anti-drug campaign but are really meant to attack him.

A sample of the sticker, which indicates that the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the Philippine Information Agency are behind the campaign, has the slogan *"Droga Lason sa Lipunan"* (Drugs Are Poison to Society) prominently displayed.

But in the word *lason*, inserted between the letters "a" and "s" is a figure resembling a skull and crossbones. This insignia appears like the letter X that, read with the rest of the word, spells out "Laxson."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DOUBLE MEANING STICKER: Anti-drugs or anti-Lacson?

Lacson, an aspiring opposition candidate for the presidency, has taken offense at the sticker. He said the stickers were intended to malign him as they implied that he was part of the drug menace threatening the country.

Palace officials either laughed off, or denied outright, Lacson's accusations that Malacañang was behind the distribution of the offensive stickers.

"I don't know if we are involved in the production of those stickers. But if we are, I don't think that's a referral to the senator. If he feels alluded to, well...," said Housing Secretary Mike Defensor, the new political and campaign spokesperson for the President.

"It's not true. There's no basis for such allegation," said Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

Defensor asked if the stickers had the name "Lacson" on them. Answering his own question, he said they did not. So Lacson should not take offense, he said.

"According to my teacher, wrong spelling [is] wrong," Defensor said.

Defensor said the President had launched a very serious campaign against illegal drugs that was highly successful.

A statement issued by the Lacson camp said the stickers were being circulated and distributed at the Philippine Journalists Inc., publisher of the government-sequestered Times Journal newspaper, reportedly "at the behest of the newspaper's chair of the board and group publisher Roberto Capco."

Capco is a former Malacañang press undersecretary.

Lacson said the stickers show that his detractors in government were "desperate."

He said he has learned that the Palace has a "full-time crew of black propagandists and is even using sequestered media outlets for this purpose."

Lacson said the PDEA and the PIA should explain the purpose of the stickers because they had nothing to do with the anti-drug campaign.

"I don't have anything against the distribution of anti-drug information materials but what they are doing is patently malicious and pure black propaganda," he said. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

New Senate row brewing over Pidal probe revival

By Michael Lim Ubac

A CRISIS is again brewing in the Senate amid the decision of 10 opposition senators, ironically with the support of Senate Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda, to conduct a separate inquiry into the Jose Pidal controversy.

At a press conference yesterday, opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, backed by 11 of the upper chamber's current 22 members, declared that the Senate committee on banks, financial institutions and currencies, which he chaired, would revive the controversial inquiry.

He said his committee, along with Sen. Edgardo Angara's committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws, would conduct hearings in about seven to 10 days.

Osmeña said the committees would subpoena the two alleged Jose Pidals—First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and his brother Ignacio Arroyo—to further answer the allegations that the First Gentleman had laundered campaign contributions.

A resolution which authorized the two committees to "conduct, jointly or separately, an inquiry in aid of legislation into the Jose Pidal controversy" effectively bypassed the primary Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo.

"There are now three primary committees," Osmeña said.

He said the blue ribbon committee had failed to clear up the controversy.

Arroyo has consistently told reporters that the inquiry would not proceed until Sen. Panfilo Lacson could present solid evidence to back up his charges.

Osmeña admitted that the revival of the probe was politically motivated: "It is a political issue in the sense that it impacts on the First Couple's credibility, honesty, and integrity."

Senate President Franklin Drilon tried to play neutral.

At a separate press conference, Drilon said, no Senate rules barred separate hearings. Still, he urged Osmeña and Angara to consult with Arroyo.

But Osmeña insisted that the resolution signed by the 12 senators need not be referred to Arroyo.

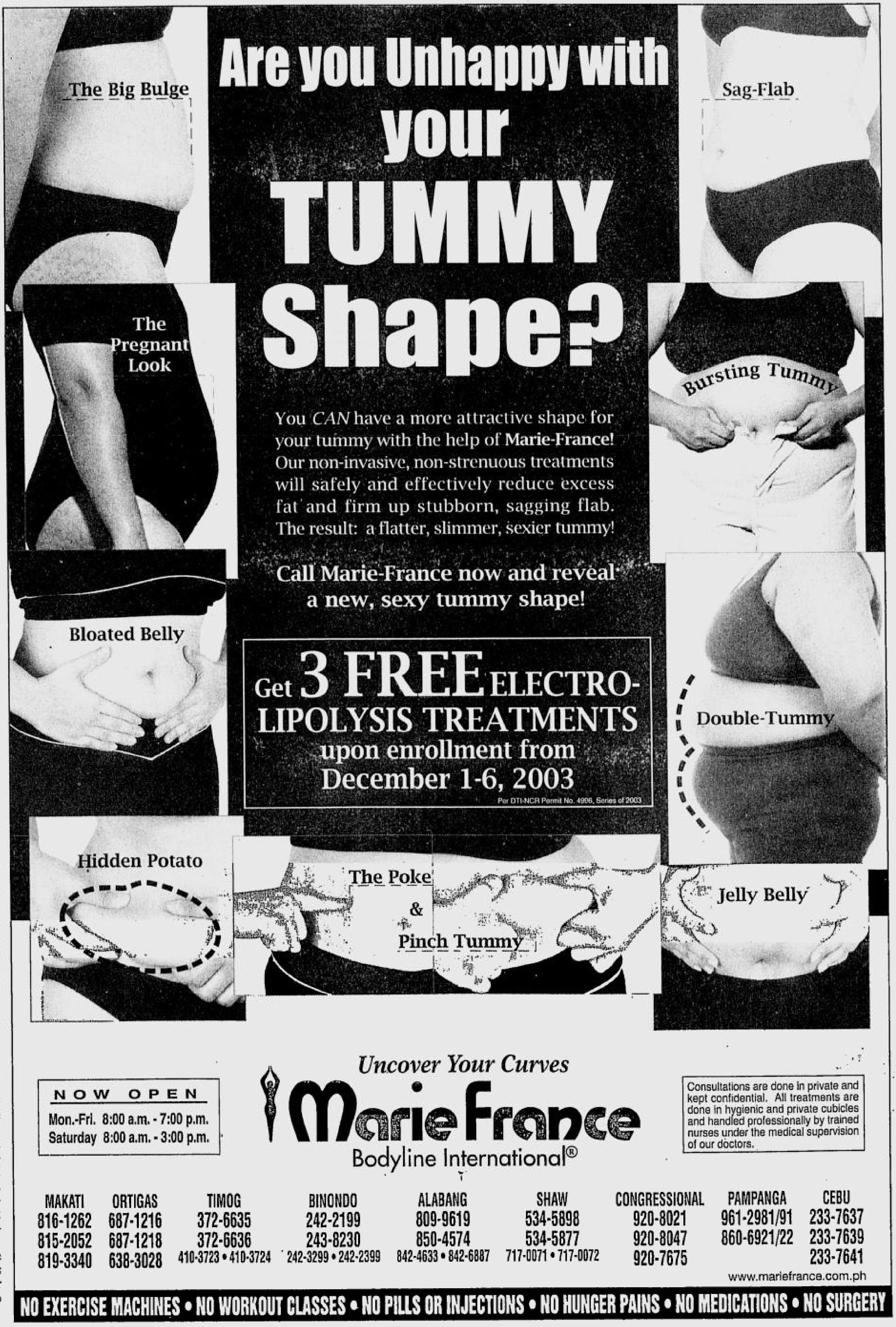
"I will give the Senate a separate report. What they do with it is up to them."

Bernad-Tuaño; 74

VICENTA Bernad-Tuaño of Dipolog and Ozamiz cities died on Nov. 28 in Cebu City. She was 74.

The widow of Abelardo Tuaño, who died in 1998, she left behind children and in-laws Pio Jose and Susan; Antonio and Maya; Ramon and Kathryn; Mariles and Frankie Laya; Mercedes and Bertrand Luna; Angelo and Cora; Patrick and Chona; and Martin and Ingrid; and 26 grandchildren.

Her remains lie at the family residence in Bitoon, Ozamiz City. Interment is scheduled for Saturday, December 6 after am 8:30 a.n. Mass at the San Lorenzo Church.



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Pinoy teener slain in Canada racial violence

By Jerome Aning

A FREE-FOR-ALL which started after a heated exchange of racial slurs between Filipino and Indo-Canadian youths led to the death of a 17-year-old Filipino student in Vancouver, Canada over the weekend.

The Canadian Press identified the slain victim as Mao Jomar Lanot, a student at the Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School. Lanot died early Saturday, local time, in a hospital after allegedly being beaten up and hit by a blunt object by his attackers.

Tupper school principal Jennifer Palmer and Filipino community leaders in Vancouver have expressed outrage over the killing.

Vancouver police spokesperson Constable Anne Drennan said Lanot, an ESL (English as Second Language) student whose family recently moved to Canada, was on his way home with three friends on Friday night, local time, when several Indo-Canadian teenagers taunted them with "racial slurs."

Taunted

Drennan said the Filipino youths likewise taunted the Indo-Canadian teenagers which led to an exchange of verbal insults. When more Indo-Canadian youths got out of cars in the area, the Filipinos fled.

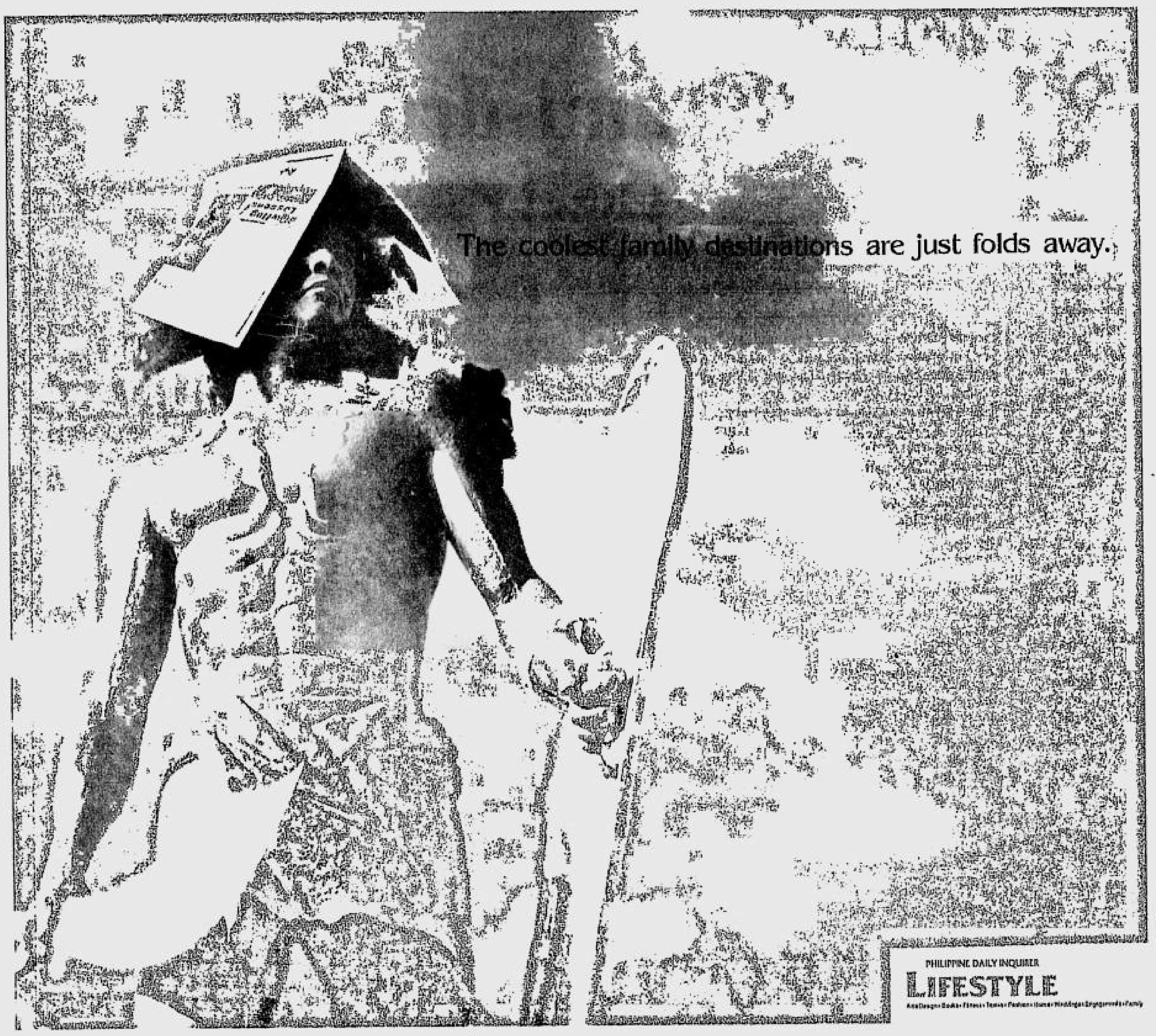
But the Indo-Canadian attackers caught up with Lanot, who, unfortunately, was at the tail end of the fleeing group and beat him up.

Police said Lanot was probably hit by a blunt object. The victim died after being rushed to the hospital.

Prior to the incident, the victim was at home after school helping his mother cook dinner. He later went out to play basketball at a local community center. At 9:30 p.m., his mother called him up and he said he would be home shortly. He did go home but in a coffin.

Drennan said they have already identified a key suspect in the attack and would soon be inviting him for questioning. She did not reveal the suspect's age, although she said he had been expelled from the victim's school.

A search warrant has also been served on the home of one of the youths believed to have participated in the attack.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401,500	33,458	22,306	17,900	12,809	10,384
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50 Filipino journalists killed since 1986

By Ronnie Lorejo
and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SINCE the "return of democracy" in the Philippines in 1986, 50 Filipino journalists have been killed, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines and the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility.

At least seven of the fatalities came from Southern Luzon. The INQUIRER's Research Group has listed 15 killed in the region.

On May 31, 2001, unidentified men shot and killed Joy Mortel, reporter of Mindoro Guardian, a struggling community paper, inside her home in Barangay Talabanhan, Occidental Mindoro. She died from multiple bullet wounds.

SPO2 Venerando Manalo, Mamburao police investigator, said criminal charges were filed against suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels two months after the killing. Police based their accusations on empty shells taken from the scene of the crime, which investigators said, were fired from the same weapon used by the NPA in killing a local policeman.

Lucena City

Two years after, in early morning of May 17 this year, Apolinario "Polly" Pobeda, a hard-hitting commentator of radio station dwTI in Lucena City, was killed in an ambush by unidentified men while he was on his way to the studio aboard his motorcycle.

Two of the arrested suspects were bodyguards of Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr., the target of Pobeda's daily acerbic tirades on the air. Talaga has vehemently denied involvement.

Amid the heated exchange of politically charged accusations, the local police chief resigned from his post while the provincial police director was transferred to the regional police office in Canlubang, Laguna.

The trial of the case is now ongoing. It started tumultuously on questions of appropriate venue. Lawyers from the Public Interest Law Center, who had been acting as lead prosecution counsels, caught the local media community by surprise after they withdrew their services for the Pobeda family.

Noel Villarante, another journalist in Laguna, was gunned down in Santa Cruz town on Aug. 19.

At first, police said Villarante was killed for his scathing criticisms of illegal gambling in the province and several politicians suspected of coddling illegal drug traffickers.

After the police presented the arrested suspect, Senando Palumbarit, colleagues of Villarante, dzJV radio commentator and stringer for a local newspaper Laguna Score, cried foul, claiming that the suspect was just a "fall guy."

Palumbarit, identified as a civilian police agent, has also professed innocence.

Earlier, Chief Supt. Jaime Caringal, Calabarzon police chief, assured media outfits in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon that the police were always ready to extend support and protection to all of their members.

Legazpi City

Years have passed since the killing of woman television newscaster Joy Militante of GMA TV Channel 12 in Legazpi City in 1997 and the death of rebel-returnee and former teacher Claire Marmol of Bombo Radyo-Legazpi in an ambush in 2001. Both killings have remained unsolved.

Another "senseless" killing, that of Albay's "Mr. Public Serviceman," John Villanueva of dzGB-AM, also in Legazpi, rocked the media community early this year. His death has also been unsolved.

Militante was attacked by an unidentified man at 6 a.m. on Aug. 20, 1997, while she was on her way to work from her boarding house on Vinzons Street in Legazpi's Old Albay District.

The assailant struck Militante with a bamboo at different parts of the body, knocking her unconscious. He dragged the victim to a nearby toilet, but fled when he realized that he was being watched by a witness from the second floor room of the boarding house.

Militante died the same day at the Mother Seaton Hospital in Naga City.

The National Bureau of Investigation district in Legazpi and the city police conducted separate investigations.

The police charged one Ramon Apuyan of Barangay 5, Old Albay, with murder before the City Prosecutor's Office based entirely on the testimony of another witness.

But the case against Apuyan was dismissed sometime in 1998.

Every year, during Militante's death anniversary, relatives and close friends, including her media colleagues, have been pressing authorities for updates on her case. But the police have remained mum.

The NBI pointed out that it was still trying very hard to convince a "credible" witness to surface.

'Ate Claire'

Another case that stained the police blotter was that of rebel-turned-journalist and radio commentator Beverly Marmol, alias "Ka Claire Domingo."

Marmol was gunned down by three suspected NPA Small Partisan Unit (Sparu) members on Feb. 17, 2001 in front of the Bombo Radyo station on Tahao Road in Legazpi after her regular radio program.

The suspected assailant was identified as Segundino Boncay, alias Ka Santi, leader of the NPA liquidation squad operating in Legazpi and Manito town in Albay.

Marmol, or "Ate Claire" as she was popularly known, was an information officer, asset and agent of the Bicol police office and had been instrumental in the improvement of the Bicol police's relationship with the community and the media.

Since her death, however, nothing has been heard about her case from the police.

Motorcycle-riding men shot and killed John Villanueva, a veteran broadcaster and former vice mayor, while he was on his way home at about 7 p.m. on April 28 in Barangay Tagaytay, Camalig town.

The death of Villanueva, who had been with the media for more than 20 years, shocked his colleagues in the province, who noted that he was not even into radio commentary. His programs had dealt mainly with public service.

The NPA unit in Bicol accused the anti-communist Kusog Kontra Komunista (KKK) and the military as the perpetrators. Villanueva had once been suspected of being a "supporter" of the leftist movement.

Florante Orobia, spokesperson of the NPA's Santos Binamira Command, condemned the killing as "a clear violation" of his human rights.

Orobia hurled his accusations against the KKK and the military after Supt. Pedro Tango, Albay police director, admitted before the provincial board that they had received information that Villanueva was supporting the communist group.

The KKK has denied responsibility for the killing, saying that its members were advocates of peace and condemned senseless killings. Established three years ago, the group is known for its anti-communist stance.

Pirates shoot dead RP sailor in Malacca

KUALA LUMPUR—Pirates shot dead a Filipino sailor in a raid on a Singaporean merchant ship in the Malacca Strait, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes which separates Malaysia from Indonesia, police said Tuesday.

The M.N. Sea Panther was heading to Bombay from Singapore when it was approached by four pirates in a fishing vessel some 30 nautical miles off the Indonesian island of Sumatra Monday, police spokesperson Abdul Rahim Jani was quoted as saying by the Bernama news agency.

Captain Maquiling Pablo told police the pirates ordered him to stop the ship but he refused and kept steaming. One of the pirates then fired several shots, hitting sailor Bato Maryjohn, 27, in the chest and killed him instantly.

Abdul Rahim said police received a report from the owner of the vessel and dispatched a team to the ship early Tuesday. It had sailed from Singapore on Nov. 29 with a crew of 14 Indonesians and Filipinos.

The narrow Malacca Strait funnels 50,000 vessels a year between the biggest economies of the West and the East, and has been a hunting ground for pirates for centuries. *AFP*

Another hard-hitting broadcaster shot dead

From page A1

Nadura in the chest, causing his instant death.

At a waiting shade, the gunmen waited for Nadura's Yamaha motorcycle to slow down on a one-way lane in front of a construction firm's motorpool before they approached him for the kill, police said.

Police quoted witnesses as saying that the attackers looked young and spoke Tagalog.

Shortly after the incident, the gunmen fled on foot toward a hilly portion of Barangay Tugbo.

Mapalo said a platoon of Army Scout Rangers was conducting "hot pursuit" operations against the killers.

He said investigators were looking into the possibility that Nadura's former comrades in the rebel movement were involved in the killing. But he said he was more inclined to believe that Nadura was silenced because of his job as a commentator.

Nadura had been with the NPA in Masbate for many years, serving as deputy secretary general of its guerrilla front committee, Mapalo said.

Nadura decided to return to the fold of the law in the early '90s and availed himself of the government's rebel returnee program in 1998. Since then, he had joined the broadcast industry and became a hard-hitting commentator, taking no sides and discussing all kinds of issues, Mapalo said.

Cry for justice

Nadura's widow Vilma cried for justice. "If he didn't have a radio program, it is likely that he would still be alive today," she grieved.

Right before he was killed, Mapalo said he himself was able to listen to Nadura's program.

"He touched on several issues. He hit DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) district engineer Paquito Mahinay for the provincial engineer's inaction on the worsening condition near the city hub toward the highway in Mobo, Masbate," the police officer said.

"His other topic was against the former Comelec (Commission on Elections) provincial officer, lawyer Mohamad Hassan, and Hassan's perceived partiality for incumbent Gov. Antonio Kho," Mapalo said.

Nadura was reportedly a staunch supporter of gubernatorial aspirant Rep. Fausto L. Seachon Jr. of Masbate's third district.

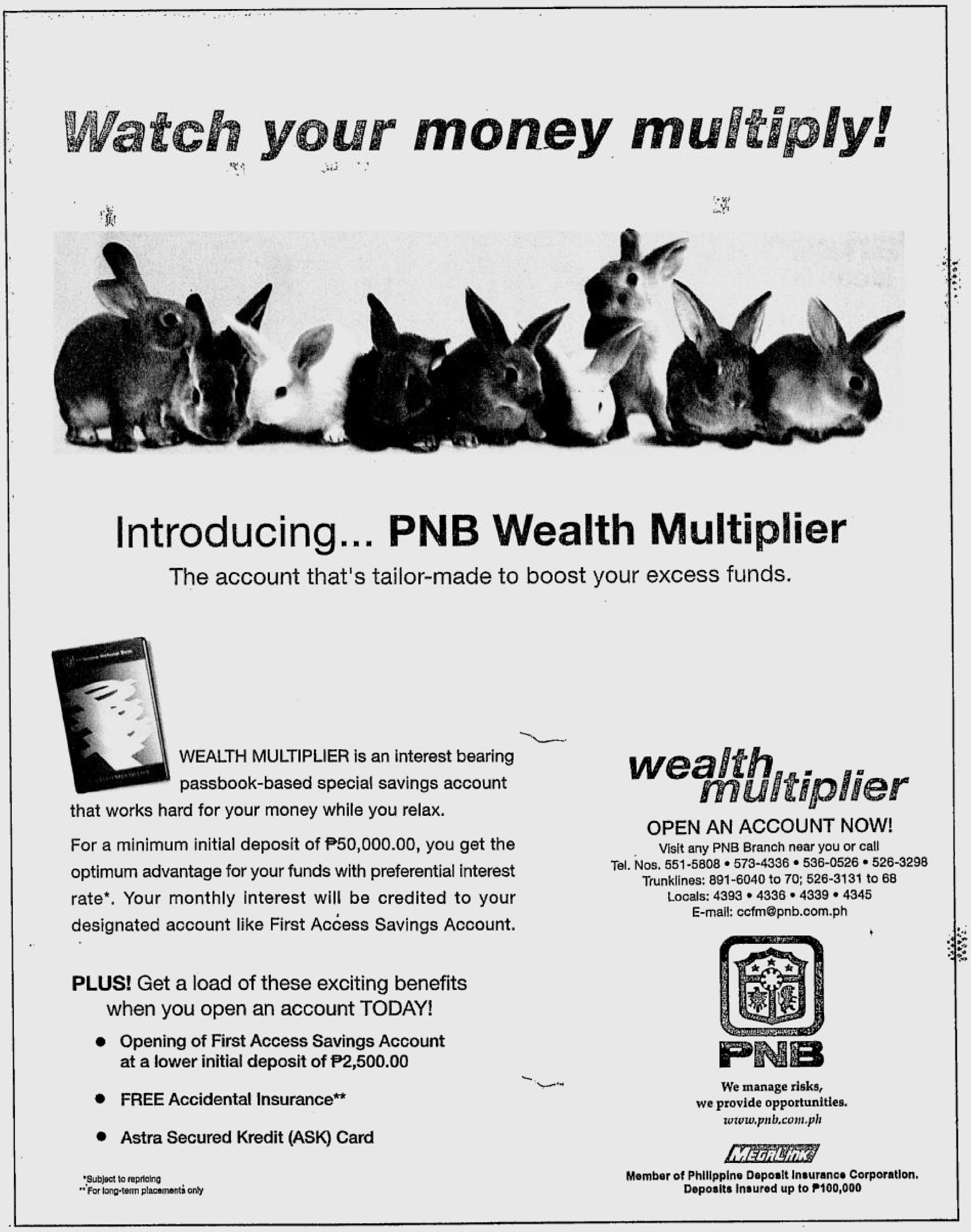
The Albay-Legazpi Press Association Inc. branded the killing as a cowardly act to silence a media man doing his duty to the public.

Nadura's UPBJM condemned it as "an attempt to stifle press freedom."

"Killing is never a justification for any broadcaster to be shut off," said Rodjie Abril, Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas chair in Albay, in his program, "Uno por Dos," over radio dzGB yesterday.

Nadura was the second broadcaster to be killed in Bicol this year.

On April 28, two unidentified men ambushed and killed John Villanueva of radio station dzGB in Legazpi City. Villanueva was aboard his motorcycle on his way home after his afternoon radio program when he was attacked in Barangay Tagaytay, Camalig, Albay.



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Dinky: It's cool to play Scrooge

From page A1

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Visiting beggars

As it is, there's a perceptible rise in the number of indigenous Filipinos flocking to the capital to beg or go caroling in the streets.

The Metro Manila Development Authority is now rounding up around "300 to 500 [of them] a week," mostly hailing from Mindanao and Northern Luzon, said MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno.

Nacianceno clarified that not all children caroling in major thoroughfares, but only those actually caught sleeping in parks and sidewalks, were being rounded up.

The DSWD has a 1,000-bed holding center at the Welfareville Compound in Mandaluyong City for those hauled off the streets nightly by the MMDA and local government units.

SOLIMAN: Don't encourage kids to go caroling in the streets.

Customs, BIR men sell off luxury cars

From page A1

and Highways—who failed the lifestyle check.

A graft investigator said expensive cars started to appear in the car market shortly after the first batch of BOC and BIR officials were charged with graft in July. The cars were reportedly being sold at prices much lower than their actual market value.

"A year 2000 Mercedes Benz type S320 (US version), which is prized at P3.5 to P3.9 million, raised eyebrows among car dealers when an official sold it for less than P3 million," said the graft investigator in a telephone interview.

In another case, a year 2000 Mercedes Benz type E240, priced at P1.8 to P2 million, was sold for P1.2 million.

Half price

Another graft investigator also related how a year 2000 Pajero was sold at P600,000, although its brand-new price was around P1.2 million. Isuzu Troopers are now going for about P600,000 to P700,000 when their price in the market is pegged at around P1.6 million.

In another instance, a P2-million Lexus was sold for half the price.

"What's funny is that in some instances, the cars were sold to their relatives, their in-laws, business associates or even drivers. Many of these buyers are of course just dummies," the first investigator said.

But these schemes are futile, he said, because in some instances, the investigation and case buildup of suspected grafters started in March.

Nocos agreed, hinting that those who "bought" the cars were getting themselves into a lot of trouble.

"We can still go after these properties in favor of the state," he said, adding that this time, the charging of graft cases will be accompanied by forfeiture proceedings against corrupt officials who failed the lifestyle check.

He said neither would those retiring save their necks.

"The early retirement will not adversely affect the lifestyle check that has already been started against them. We can still file criminal charges against them, as well as initiate forfeiture proceedings," Nocos said in a telephone interview.

Cases in the nature of unexplained wealth do not prescribe, meaning there was no time limit for filing charges involving ill-gotten wealth, he said.

"We can go after them as long as they are alive," Nocos said.

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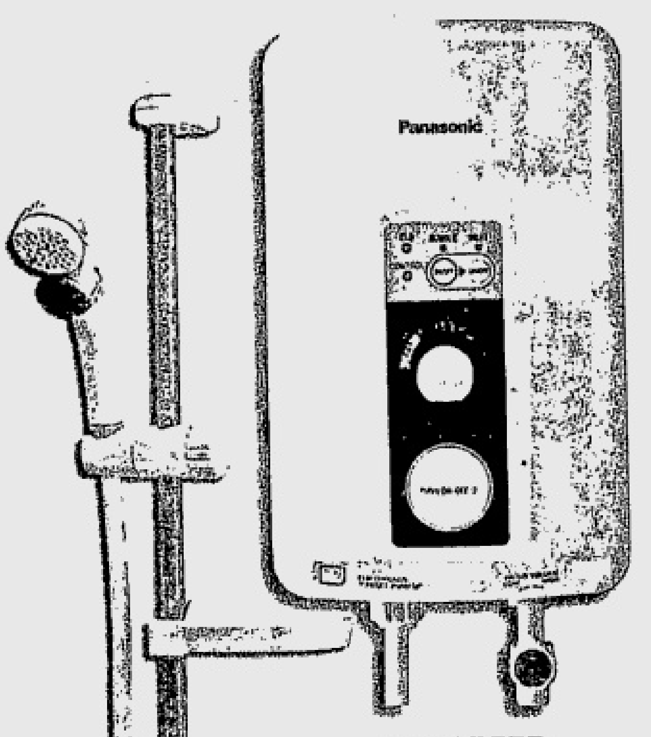

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Asians bat for Asian UN chief

UNITED NATIONS—Asian nations will press the United Nations to make sure that an Asian takes over as UN Secretary General when Kofi Annan winds up his term in three years, the Philippines said Monday.

"If we are serious in our intention to have an Asian succeed the secretary general, we must make our intentions known now," said Lauro Baja, the ambassador from the Philippines.

At a recent meeting of Asian nations, he said: "There was an agreement that it should be Asia's turn in 2006."

Of the seven secretary generals since the world body was founded in the shadow of World War II, only one has been Asian—U Thant of Burma, who served from 1961 to 1971.

Annan, from Ghana, and Egypt's Boutros Boutros-Ghali have been the two UN chiefs from the African continent.

There has been one from the Americas, Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru, and three Europeans—Austria's Kurt Waldheim, Sweden's Dag Hammarskjold and Trygve Lie of Norway.

The secretary general is appointed by the UN General Assembly upon recommendation of the security council.

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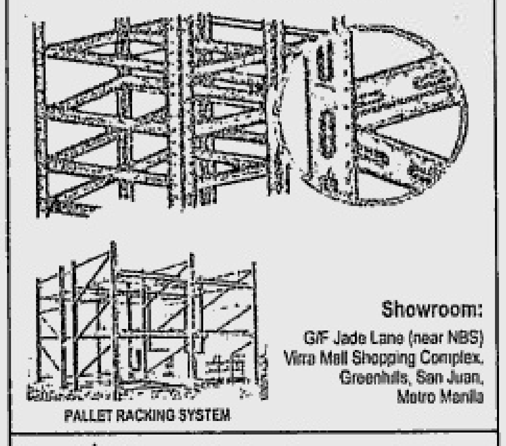

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December
1-31 Christmas Light-Up 2003 • 1-7 Hari Raya Light-Up 2003 • 5 World Wrestling Entertainment • 7 David Tao Zhe - Soul Power Asia Tour 2003 • 7 Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon 2003 • 12 Singapore Symphony Orchestra - Christmas Carol Concert - Handel's Messiah • 16 Duran Duran 78-03 'LIVE' in Singapore • 19-20 Singapore Symphony Orchestra - Christmas Concert • 25 Christmas • 21-28 Dance India Taste India • 31 Countdown to 2004

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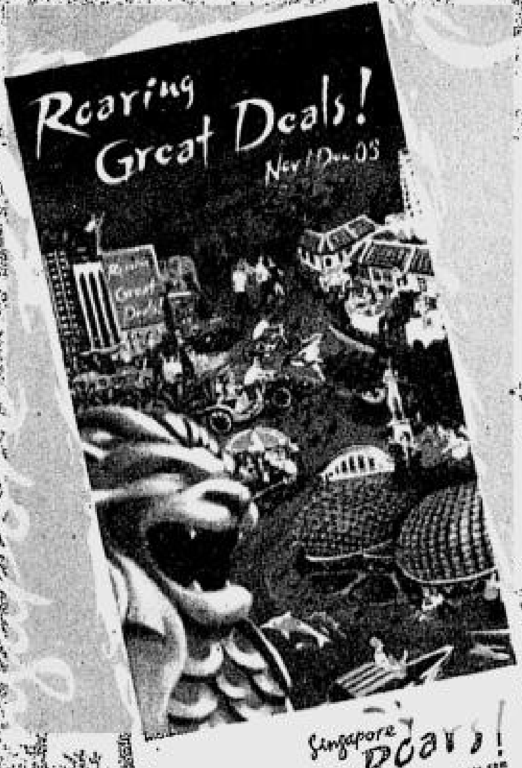

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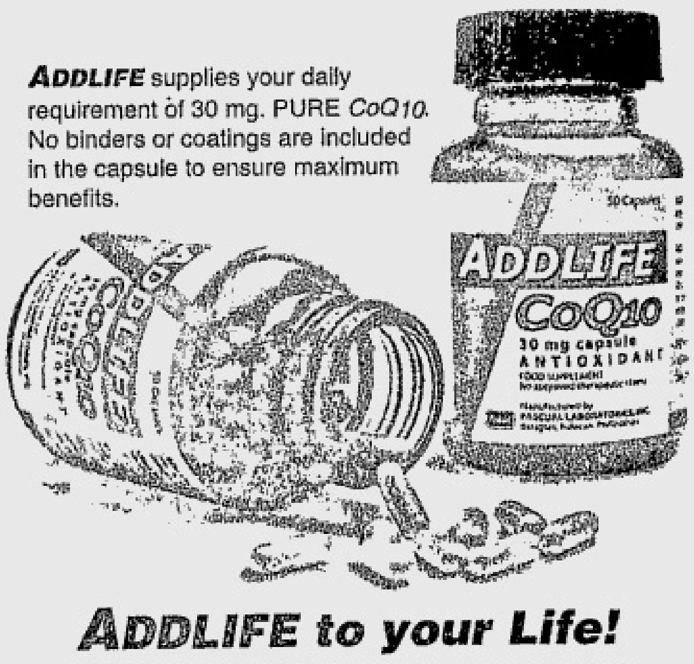

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DOOR-TO-DOOR SALESMEN APPLY NOW!

President's men wage turf war

From page A1

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"He is not Lakas, he is LP (Liberal Party)," Alvarez said.

DEFENSOR

ALVAREZ

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"Splitting turf, that's her style," said the official who did not want to be named. He pointed to the case of Presidential Adviser on Political Affairs Hernani Braganza, who shares the functions of Jose Ma. Rufino as presidential liaison officer.

Instead of Ms Macapagal uniting her government, the official said, her management style pitted her officials against each other.

Just a kid

Another administration official remarked that Defensor should not be the President's political spokesperson because "he is just a kid."

But the camp of Braganza defended Defensor who, like Braganza, was a Spice Boy during his days at the House.

"Mike is very close to the President so he can really speak for her," a source in Braganza's office said.

The source said Braganza was not offended by Defensor's appointment, because his boss was in charge of organizing the President's campaign down to the grassroots.

But Defensor yesterday said he called up Alvarez to explain his side. "I didn't mean to belittle him, I just said that when he gave statements to the media, those were not to be interpreted as the President's position."

Alvarez was hurt, he said, but accepted his explanation.

Ever the diplomat, Speaker Jose de Venecia said he did not see any conflict between the roles of Alvarez and Defensor.

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"This will be a long campaign and not one man, no matter how astute, can handle all the issues," Alvarez said.

"For our victory, we should build harmony and help each other. There's enough responsibility for all of us and there's no need for credit-grabbing," Alvarez said.

Mere propaganda

Meanwhile, Lakas congressmen described as mere propaganda the reports that veteran members were set to bolt the ruling party.

Representatives Exequiel Javier of Antique, Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur, Prospero Nograles of Davao City and Augusto Syjuco of Iloilo said the reports, if true, could be a blessing in disguise as this would help cleanse Lakas' ranks this early.

Javier, Lakas co-chair for Western Visayas, said those who earlier bolted Lakas left the party not because they wanted to, but because they had no other choice. Others, he said, were not original Lakas members and decided to return to their old party.

The congressmen said they would remain with Lakas and campaign for President Macapagal-Arroyo and her running mate to ensure their victory next year.

Pichay said Lakas had a number of new recruits who could easily replace those who were planning to leave.

"Many people are gravitating toward Lakas because of their belief in the President's effective governance and leadership, as well as the party's pro-people, pro-country principles and commitments," he said.

Nograles said Lakas would retain the loyal ones who believed in the party's platform of government.

"Those who are only trying to look like Lakas members for convenience are expected to bolt now. It's good to cleanse our ranks early because they want to join us," Nograles said.

Syjuco said the tried and tested members would remain with Lakas. *With a report from Cynthia Balana*

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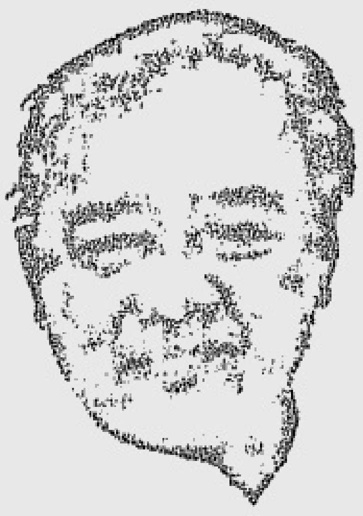

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CHURCH JUSTICE

Bacani accuser says she's happy

By Blanche Rivera

THE FORMER secretary who has accused Novaliches Bishop Teodoro Bacani of making sexual advances against her, is happy that he has been replaced as head of the diocese.

The Vatican accepted Bacani's resignation last week and appointed San Fernando Bishop Antonio Tobias to the post, but his installation has yet to be announced.

source said the 35-year-old woman felt she had won justice, and was glad she had brought her case to the Catholic church.

In her complaint filed before the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila, the woman said her boss of five years had tried to hug and kiss her in his office.

Papal Nuncio to the Philippines Archbishop Antonio Franco conducted an investigation and submitted the results to Rome.

In accepting Bacani's resignation, the Vatican cited a provision of Canon Law that says a bishop who has become unsuited to fulfill his ministry should be requested to resign. But the Nunciature denied that Bacani had been so requested.

The woman is said to be currently studying and working "somewhere in Metro Manila." She quit Bacani's employ shortly before filing her complaint early this year.

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Palace: No political deal on power hike

From page A1

and we hope the ERC will consider our complaints."

Pimentel said the ERC showed "insensitivity to the needs of the people" in granting the rate increase sought by Meralco.

The additional 12 centavos per kilowatt-hour that some four million customers will pay Meralco starting January will allow the country's largest power distributor to earn about P2 billion more next year.

Unjustified

Pimentel said the rate hike was "totally unjustified" because the ERC chair admitted that the P2 billion in additional income to Meralco next year would finance the firm's new projects.

He said the expansion of any business should not be charged to its customers, but to the owners and shareholders of a company who should put up the capital needed for the expansion.

Pimentel believed that the rate increase could have been motivated by Meralco's desire to raise money to allow the company to pay the refund to customers, estimated at P28 billion, ordered by the Supreme Court last year. The high court barred Meralco from passing on to customers its income tax payments since 1994.

"If so, this is another case of being fried in one's own fat since it is the customers themselves who would be paying for their refund, and not the company who had been ordered to refund the customers by the SC," the senator said.

Outside the Senate, protests from consumer groups are mounting against the rate increase.

Picket

The Freedom from Debt Coalition picketed the ERC office yesterday to denounce the commission's decision to grant Meralco a provisional authority to increase its rates.

"This recent move by the Commission enrages us consumers who have long been suffering from high electricity rates. The ERC has once again prioritized the interest of Meralco over the interest of the consumers," FDC vice president Wilson Fortaleza said.

"It is also ironic that this news came out at the start of the government's celebration of the National Energy Week this week. The consumers have no reason to celebrate the Energy Week. Instead we have all the reasons to condemn this government for acting in favor of the interest of the power companies, particularly of Meralco," Fortaleza said.

Kilusang Mayo Uno said the ERC decision to grant Meralco's petition for a rate increase was made without a public hearing and should be met with nationwide protests.

In Lucena City, a newly formed multi-sectoral coalition said it would launch street protests against the impending Meralco rate increase.

Marilyn Quirez, a convenor of the alliance, said the increase was unjust. "This is the most painful Christmas gift of the Lopezes and the Macapagal administration to the Filipino people. But the suffering masses will not take this sitting down," she said.

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap said the power rate increase showed the Macapagal administration's indifference to the plight of the poor.

"This Urban Poor Week, this power rate hike is yet another reminder of the government's indifference to the plight of the jobless and homeless. The holidays would be a very merry Christmas for Meralco and a Good Friday for the poor," said Kadamay chair Carmen Deunida, better known as Nanay Mameng, the feisty urban poor leader in the anti-Estrada demonstrations in 2000.

"This increase was allowed by Ms Macapagal as a goodwill measure for the Lopezes whose star-newscaster-turned-senator is being sought as the President's running mate in 2004," she said.

Pete Ilagan, president of the National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms, said: "Consumers should not bear the burden of Meralco's mismanagement. It should be the company's stockholders and management."

Failure

For its part, the Philippine Consumer Watch lashed out at the government for its "failure" to assert its authority to stop Meralco from passing on to consumers its funding needs for capital investment.

"The key shareholders of Meralco—the government and a joint-venture between the (Lopez group's) First Philippine Holdings and Spain's Union Fenoza—should shell out their own money to finance its projects," former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, chair of Philippine Consumer Watch, said in a statement.

"It is indeed ironic that Meralco has been borrowing heavily and is saddled with debt not because of its captive costumers' fault but because of its inefficiency," Enrile said.

Enrile said Meralco was the most inefficient electric utility in the world because it was suffering from a systems loss of 16.14 percent. But according to a Meralco third quarter report, the firm's systems loss for the first nine months was 11.43 percent.

Systems loss refers to electricity dissipated due to technical faults in the distribution system and to pilferage. Utilities are allowed to recover from customers the cost of up to 9.5 percent of the systems loss.

Understanding

Meralco assured its customers that the new rate increase would enable it to continue providing quality service.

"Meralco is seeking the understanding of the public and assures them that the 12-centavo rate increase will go a long way toward further upgrading its electric service," Meralco chair Manuel M. Lopez said in a statement.

Lopez said the company "is keenly aware of the role that a reliable power distribution plays in support of the economy, in attracting investments and in creating jobs for our people."

A global group of energy experts said rising power costs was becoming a worldwide trend.

At a briefing, secretary general Geral Doucet of the World Energy Council said governments must address electricity affordability by seeing to it that power plants were running efficiently.

"Pricing is an important factor in ensuring that we continually enjoy (electricity), but it is also a basis on an investment's viability," Doucet said. "We cannot hide this fact."

He said consumers must pay the cost of energy because investors would not put money into energy projects if consumers insisted on cheap electricity. *With reports from Ronnel W. Domingo, Martin P. Marfil and Norman Bordadora*

Police charge 15 persons in kidnap-slay of Coke exec

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE ELITE Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) has formally charged 15 persons in the kidnapping and brutal killing last month of Coca-Cola executive Betti Chua Sy.

One of the 15 was actually an employee of the Sy family's Metalwealth Co., investigators said.

Charged before the Department of Justice with kidnapping with ransom and murder were Romeo F. Dacallos, Ramon B. Demol, his son Mariolito Demol and daughter Edith D. Alaser, Ernesto P. Palla, Rodolfo C. Ortoza, Cerio Macanip Jr., Gerardo M. Anover, Ramil P. Victoriano, Baby Tamayo and five John Does.

Dacallos has surrendered to police and confessed to the crime, while Ramon Demol and Palla have been arrested. The rest are at large.

Police said that Mariolito Demol, an employee of the Sy family, was the group's tipster, and that his sister Edith Alaser owned the house in Trece Martires, Cavite, where Betti was brought and held.

Mariolito Demol did not report for work after the kidnapping was reported in the media, police said.

Dacallos, an FX taxi driver, surrendered to Parañaque City police a day after the kidnapping. He led lawmen to the Trece Martires house, and identified the other persons involved in the kidnapping.

P10-M demand

Sy, a finance director of the Coca Cola Export Co., was kidnapped on Nov. 17 in Novaliches, Quezon City. Her corpse was found the following day in Don Galo, Parañaque.

Pacer's Supt. Allan Purisima said Betti was on board her Toyota RAV-4 on her way to work in Makati when the kidnappers struck at around 7:30 a.m. at P. de la Cruz St., Sitio Gana, Barangay Nagkakaisang Nayon in Novaliches.

At around 12:30 p.m., Betti's brother Winnifredo received a call from the kidnappers who demanded P10 million in ransom, Purisima said.

Security guard Jorlito Lucero said that earlier at around 9:45 a.m., he saw Betti's car, which had bullet holes and bloodstains, stop at the corner of Cuenco and Biak-na-Bato streets in Novaliches.

Lucero said that minutes later, a white Toyota Tamaraw FX taxi arrived. A man got out of the RAV-4, took out Betti's body, and moved it to the taxi while two other men from the RAV-4 stood as lookouts.

All of them then boarded the taxi and took off, he said.

Lucero identified Anover as one of the lookouts.

Taxi driver

In his confession, Dacallos said he drove the FX taxi.

At around 5 a.m. of Nov. 17, Ortoza, Victoriano and Macanip came to his house in Sto. Niño, Parañaque, and rented his taxi for P1,000.

Dacallos drove the group to Sampaloc Street, also in Parañaque, where four men boarded his taxi. One of them took over the wheel.

They proceeded to Novaliches and, at the Petron station in Nagkakaisang Nayon, Macanip, Victoriano and three of the other men alighted.

Macanip and Victoriano boarded a waiting white Toyota sedan taxi where Anover was on board.

Dacallos' taxi moved on. Along the way, he overheard the one driving tell someone over a cell phone: "*Nasaan na* (Where)?"

Shortly, his taxi overtook and cut the path of Betti Sy's RAV-4, while the white Toyota sedan taxi with Anover, Victoriano and Macanip on board blocked the RAV-4's rear.

Gunfire

Five unidentified men approached Betti's vehicle, Dacallos said. When she refused to open the door, they fired at the car.

Eventually, the five men were able to open the car. They drove off toward Biak na Bato, where the unconscious and bloodied Betti was transferred to the FX taxi.

Dacallos said they proceeded to a house in Heritage Homes, Barangay Gregorio, Trece Martires.

He said Alaser and Tamayo arrived later and were followed by Victoriano, Macanip, Ramon Demol and Palla.

Kidnappers are getting bolder

From page A1

men smashed a window of the vehicle and pointed their guns at Cosme, according to an officer of the Southern Police District. They then seized the child and sped off.

Both the driver and the maid were reported unharmed.

Shortly after noon, the officer said, the SPD crime laboratory received information that the van had been recovered near the Legacy building on the national road in Tunasan. He said authorities had yet to examine the vehicle at press time.

The SPD's Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez refused to provide more details, saying that doing so would jeopardize follow-up operations and endanger the life of the boy, a member of the Chinese-Filipino community.

It is this community that has been heavily hit by the kidnappings.

'Cry of the moment'

Reyes announced that tighter security measures, including an integrated system of checkpoints and increased police visibility, would immediately be implemented to stem kidnappings in the metropolis.

"This is the cry of the moment," he told reporters at the National Capital Region Police Office headquarters in Taguig after meeting with police district commanders and station chiefs as well as Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

"People should not think of this move as reminiscent of martial law but a means to assure them that they are being protected," he said.

Reyes said the renewed drive against kidnapping would be a consolidated effort of the police, MMDA and local government units.

They would present the implementing plan to President Macapagal-Arroyo during the Metro Manila mayors' meeting in Malacañang on Thursday, Reyes said.

The President last week ordered the police to set up checkpoints in the metropolis and other urban centers in the wake of the fresh wave of kidnappings and bank robberies.

From mayors down

"Everyone, from the mayors down to the barangay *tanod*, will be involved in the drive," Reyes said.

The PNP would strictly enforce the "laws of the land" at designated checkpoints, including the proper use of license plates as well as the arrest and impounding of suspicious people and vehicles.

The man whom Ms Macapagal had named anti-kidnapping czar also said policemen would be required to "pound the pavements" to ensure police visibility.

Reyes said that more mobile police outposts would be deployed, and that the MMDA's 2,500 traffic enforcers would assist the police in the campaign.

"This would warn criminals and assure Metro Manila residents that the police are vigilant in this crusade against kidnapping," he said.

Reyes said the security measures would be "implemented in earnest," by early next week.

He said the formulation of the guidelines was taking time because these had to be discussed with and approved by local executives.

'Wanted' posters

Reyes also announced that the posters of nine alleged kidnappers, who carry a maximum bounty of P1 million on their heads, would be posted at the airports, seaports, markets and other public places.

"We encourage civilians, our countrymen, to report any information that will lead to the capture, arrest or neutralization of these people with corresponding rewards anywhere from P500,000 to P1 million," he said.

The alleged kidnappers were identified as Harold Fajardo and Rolando "Rolly" Fajardo, members of the Fajardo kidnap gang who each carries a P1-million prize on their heads; Allan Niegas of the Allan Niegas group, P1 million; Vilmor Catamco, P900,000, and Dr. Eddie Trinidad, P850,000, both of the Fajardo group; Jose Lim "Jack" Arnuco of the Pegarido gang, P750,000; Renaldo Cacho of the Estrada syndicate, P500,000; and Feliciano Laygo and Jaime Moog, leader and member of the Feliciano Laygo gang, P500,000 each.

The name of Dr. Roberto Obeles Yap, leader of the Obeles group who, along with three alleged cohorts, was killed in a clash with policemen in Dinalupihan, Bataan, two weeks ago, has been stricken off the list.

Daily trial hearings

To put more teeth in the anti-crime drive, the Department of Justice and other law enforcement units will move for daily hearings in high-profile criminal cases, particularly those involving drugs and kidnapping, Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño said.

Zuño made the announcement after a meeting of the National Council on the Administration of Justice at the justice department yesterday.

Among those in attendance were Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong, Interior Secretary Jose Lina, Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, Supreme Court Administrator Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. and Bureau of Corrections Director Dionisio Santiago.

Zuño said the council arrived at the decision after the President ordered the speeding up of the prosecution of criminal cases.

"We are already hastening the prosecution of these cases but Secretary Lina said they still feel it's not fast enough," he said.

Zuño said the government would focus on 50 high-profile cases that the Department of Interior and Local Government had identified as top priority. He said a list of these cases would be forwarded to Justice Velasco's office.

Velasco said that while he agreed with the idea of daily hearings, the matter would depend on whether the judges concerned had the time and resources.

Zuño said one of the high-profile cases was that of Ronnie Mitra, former mayor of Panulukan, Quezon, who was caught with three others in October 2001 trying to ship an estimated P1 billion worth of shabu to Metro Manila.

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court is hearing Mitra's case. *With a report from Philip C. Tubeza*

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Lawmaker scores NPA for extortion

From page A1

ROSALES

Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) said that candidates should be free to campaign without fear from "armed non-state groups" to ensure honest and peaceful elections in May.

"Akbayan, for one, has received reports back in 2001 over alleged harassment from NPA rebels who threatened its members against campaigning for Akbayan in the party-list election," Rosales said.

Akbayan is a rival group of Bayan Muna, a party-list organization identified with the mainstream Left. Rosales is identified with one of at least two factions that bolted the mainstream Left during the early 1990s.

Bayan Muna has denied the military's allegation that it is a front of the CPP.

Rosales said she and fellow Akbayan Rep. Mario Aguja had filed a bill seeking to criminalize extortion practices by the NPA during election "after several party-list organizations aired concern over harassment and extortion attempts from the NPA."

"Several party-list and district representatives have signified their intention to co-author" House Bill No. 6581, Rosales said.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, just laughed off Rosales' proposal. "If that would make Etta happy, we'll just let her," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview. "Etta lacks common sense."

The CPP-NPA has its own revolutionary government and its own set of laws, according to Rosal.

HB 6581 notes that it has become the practice of the NPA as well as "allied organizations" of the CPP and the National Democratic Front to "demand or extort money from candidates for public office."

The bill says the funds are received by communist rebels "in exchange for so-called 'permits to campaign' ... inside claimed territories."

It is common knowledge that for a fee the NPA issues permits to campaign in its area during the election period.

"This practice goes against the principles of human rights, political freedom and electoral reform that the NDF, CPP and NPA themselves profess to adhere to," HB 6581 says.

Rosales said that while mechanisms were in place to ensure that the police and military were accountable for cases of harassment, "the same cannot be said of rebel groups which operate outside the rule of law."

Akbayan has "begun giving moral support for the formation of local coalitions that will monitor and report on extortion attempts by the NPA," Rosales said.

Rep. Satur Ocampo, national president of Bayan Muna, has a different take on threats facing party-list groups in the 2004 elections.

In a statement, Ocampo noted that 35 Bayan Muna supporters have been killed by military and paramilitary agents.

"Many of the killings were justified by the military by tagging the victims as members of the armed insurgent group, the NPA," Ocampo said.

He has filed House Resolution No. 1404 urging the government to take appropriate measures to carry out its international obligations to protect civil and political rights.

"There are sinister forces out there which try to undermine efforts by the progressive militant forces to avail themselves of that small opening of democratic space," Ocampo said. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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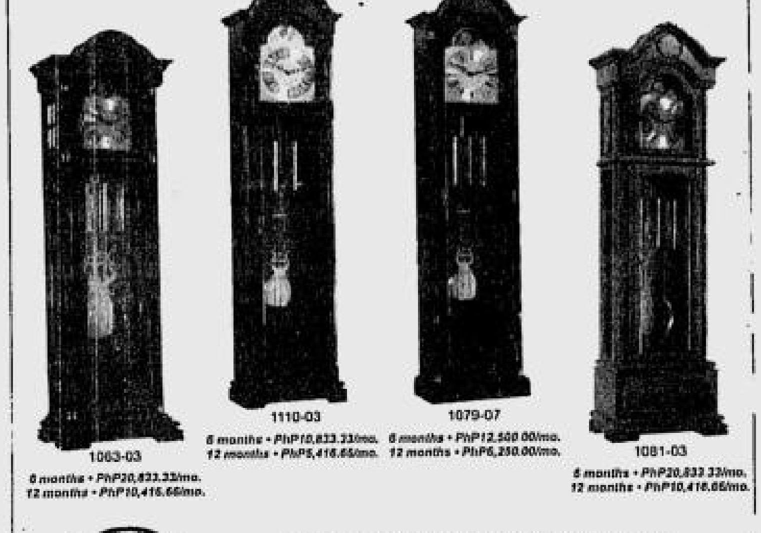

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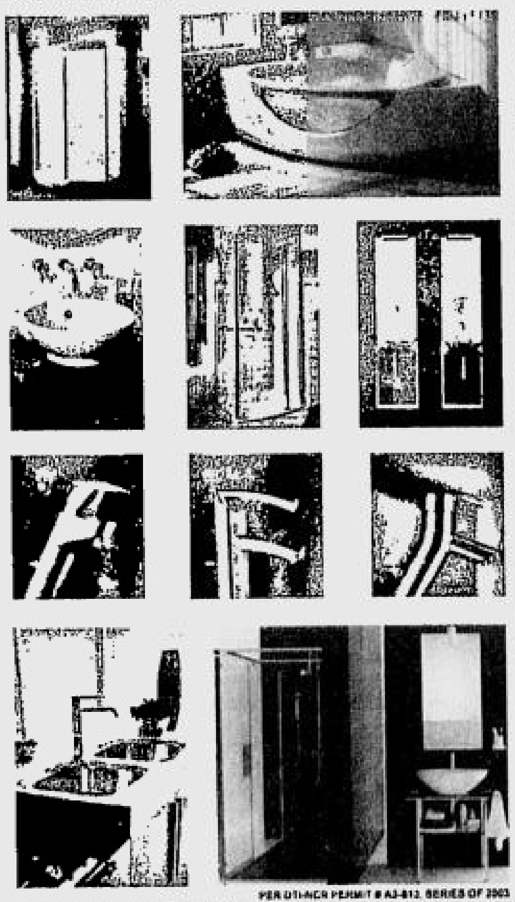

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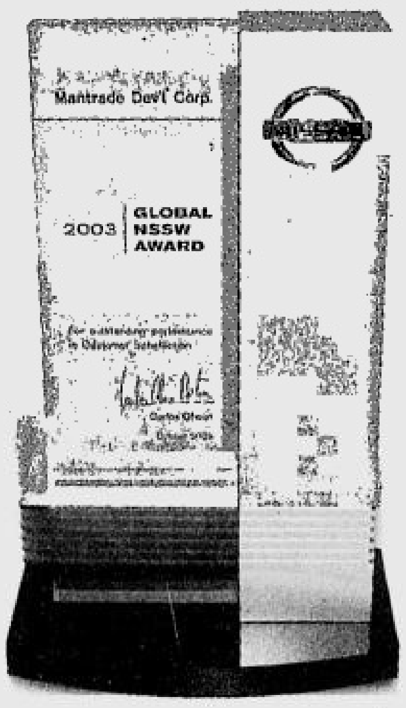

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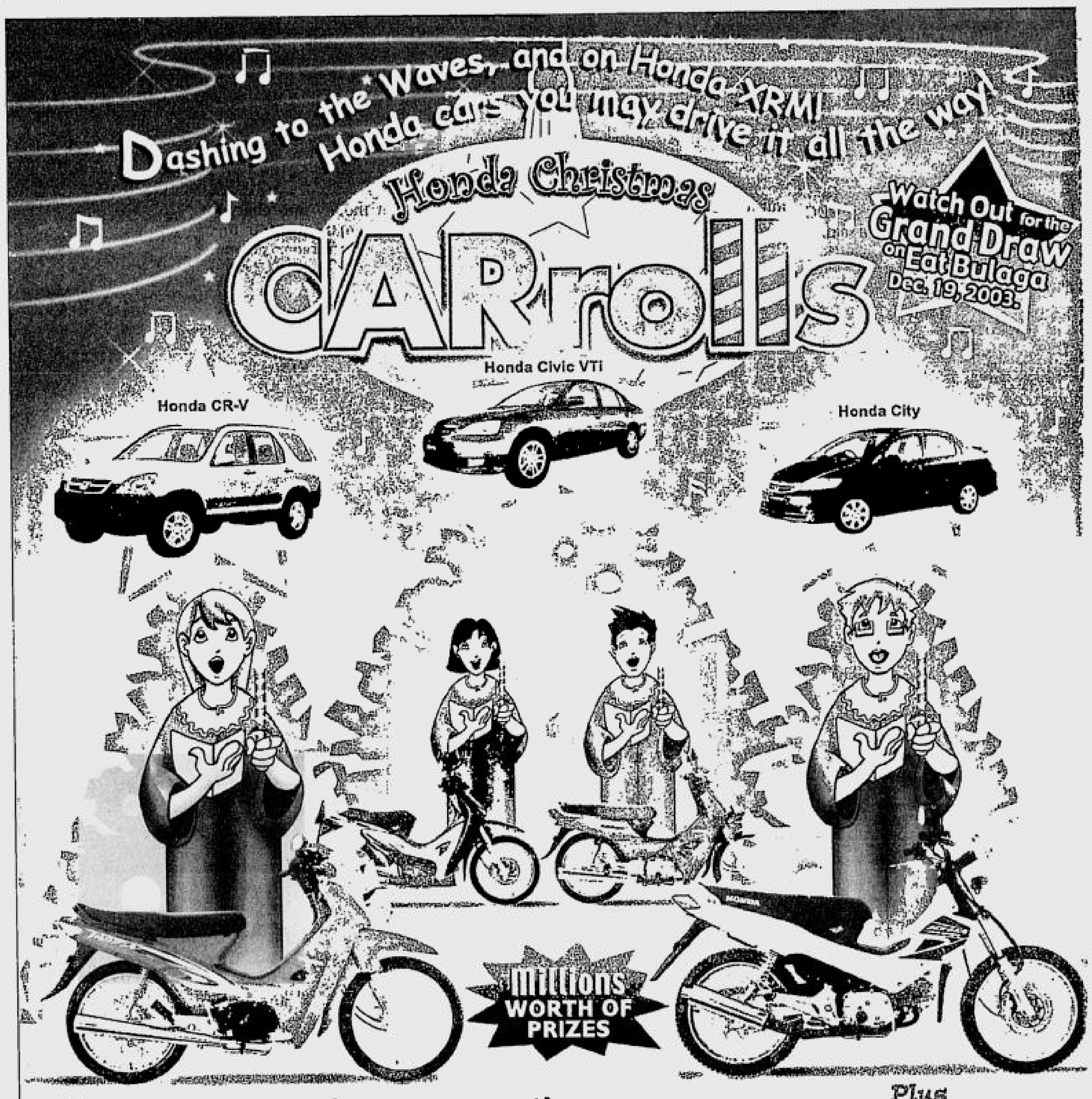
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Mapapakanta ka sa saya sa Paskong Honda! Sa pagbili pa lang, may P300 gift certificate ka na! Just buy a Honda Wave Alpha motorcycle, at pwede kang manalo ng Honda CR-V! Or buy either a Honda Wave 125 or Dream 125 para manalo ng Honda Civic VTi! At kung Honda XRM ang type mo, you get a chance to win a Honda City!
Kaya ngayong Pasko, punta na sa nearest Honda dealer!

* Insurance, LTO registration, freight charges are not included.

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3758, Series of 2003

PROMO PERIOD: September 10 - December 15, 2003
THE PIONEER IN 4-STROKE TECHNOLOGY

MECHANICS

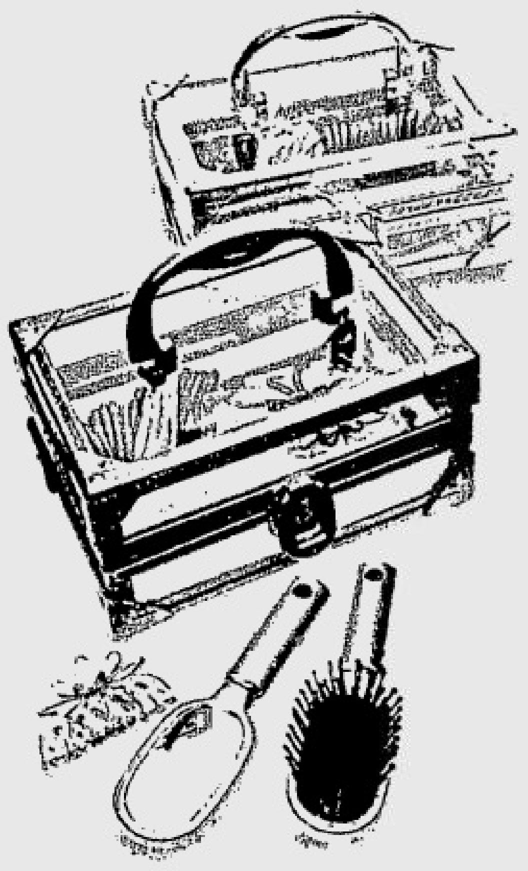
1. Every purchase of the following Honda motorcycle models entitles the buyer to a raffle ticket* that would give him / her a chance to win any of these corresponding prizes in the grand raffle draw:

Motorcycle Models	Grand Prize
A. Honda Wave Alpha	Honda CR-V
B. Honda Wave 125 or Dream 125	Honda Civic VTi
C. Honda XRM Dual Sports	Honda City

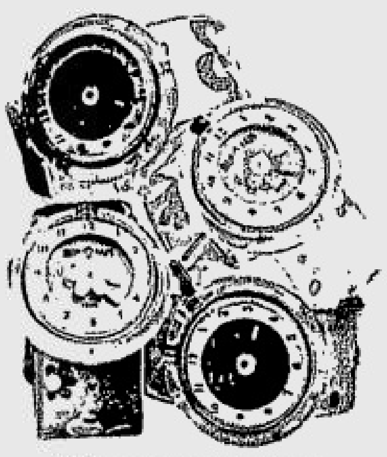
* The raffle ticket must be completely filled up with buyer's name, address, telephone number, engine-frame number, dealer's name, date of purchase and signature affixed. The stub must be dropped in the corresponding raffle box among the three (3) designated drop boxes at the dealer shop. If the raffle ticket is dropped in the wrong drop box, this entry is automatically invalid. Also, the buyer instantly receives a gift certificate worth P 300, which can be used as a discount on the next unit purchase, on spare parts or motorcycle accessories.

2. Grand Raffle Draw will be held in Eat Bulaga on December 19, 2003 under the supervision of a DTI representative. Deadline for dropping of entries is on December 15, 2003.
3. Purchase of the Honda motorcycle models, indicated above, must be made at any participating Honda dealer nationwide, from September 10, 2003 up to December 15, 2003, in order to qualify for the promo.
4. Any participant can win only once in the grand draw. If name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize and the lower prize shall be raffled off again. The name appearing in the winning raffle ticket will be declared as the winner.
5. Winners will be notified through registered mail. When claiming prizes, winners shall present 2 valid ID's, registered mail notice, together with the sales invoice and/or LTO registration of the motorcycle unit purchased.
6. All raffle prizes should be claimed within sixty (60) days from receipt of notification or the prizes will be forfeited, with the prior approval from DTI.
7. All winners should claim their prizes at any of the following offices of Honda Philippines, Inc. a) Km. 17 East Service Road, South Superhighway, Parañaque City, b) Lahug, Cebu City, and c) Buhangin, Davao City.
8. The decision of Honda Philippines, Inc., with the concurrence of DTI, on issues that may arise during the promotion will be deemed final.
9. All prizes are tax-free and are not convertible to cash. Also, all registration requirements of the prize should be the responsibility of the winner.
10. All employees of Honda Philippines, Inc., its affiliates, dealers, advertising agency, and their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified in the promo.
11. Promo period is from September 10, 2003 up to December 15, 2003. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3758, Series of 2003

We've got it all for


Hair Accessories Kits

Collared Knit Top with Short Denim Skirt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Accessories

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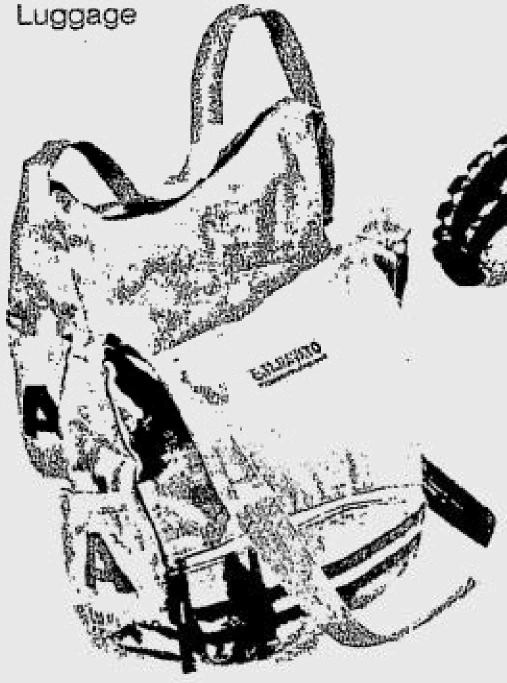
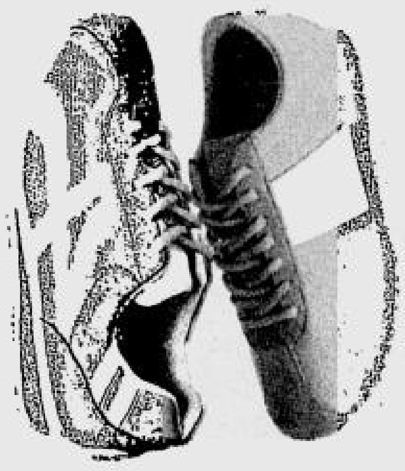
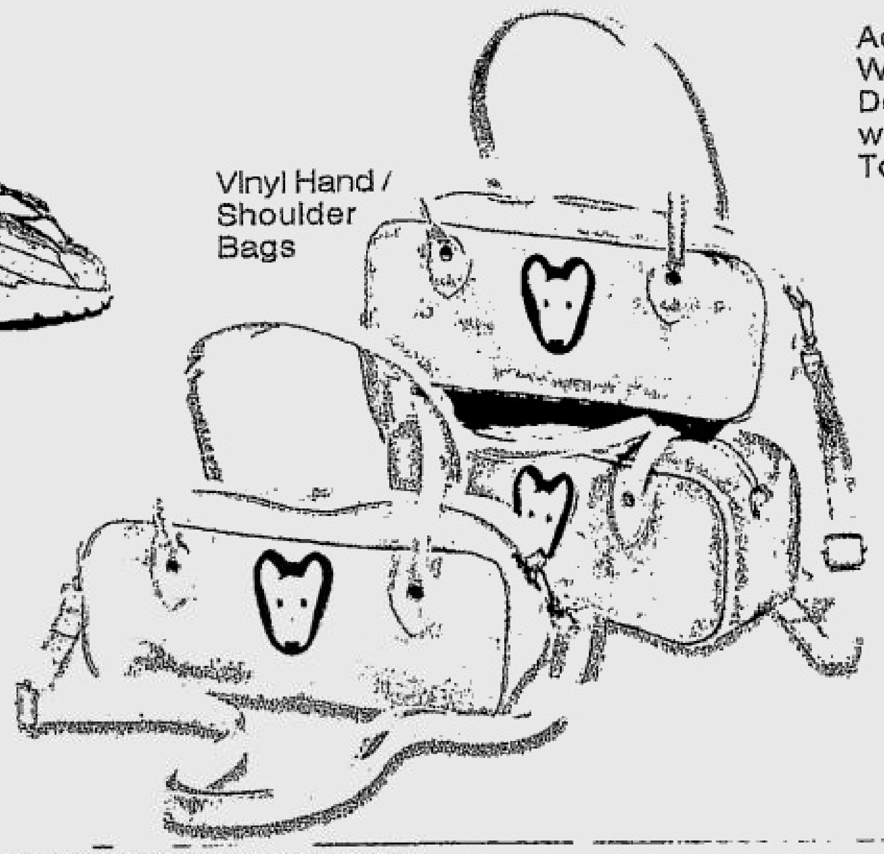
All the fab styles for gals


Shoulder Bags
Luggage


Two-tone Laced-up Rubbers
Teens' Shoes

Acid Wash Denims with Knit Tops

Layered Halter Tops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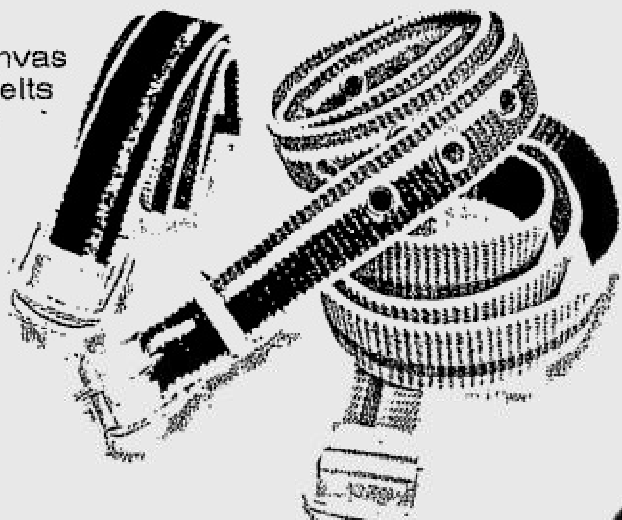
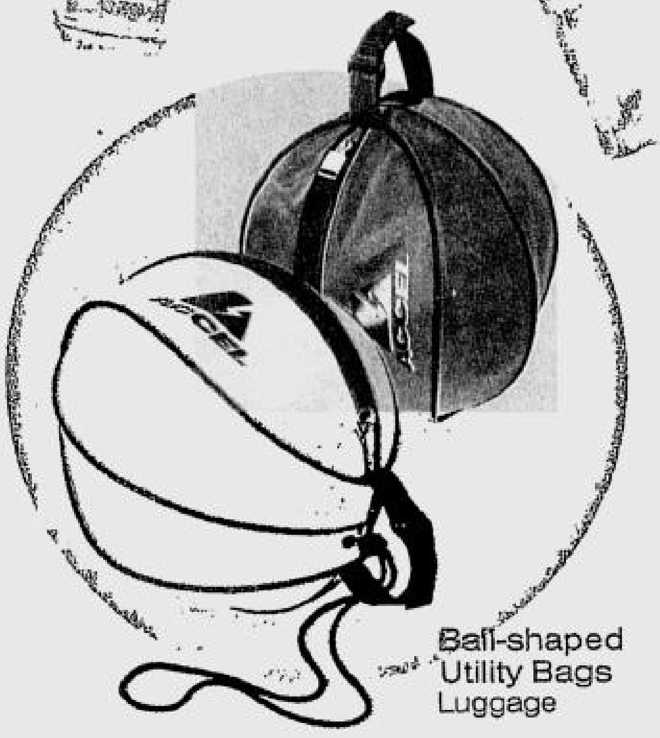

Woven Canvas
Garrison Belts
Accessories

Knit Tops with
Celebrity Prints

Carry-along
Personal
Sports Jugs
Accessories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Utility Bags
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with Denim
Cargo Pants

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Wallets
with Pocket
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Accessories

Fashion Shades Accessories

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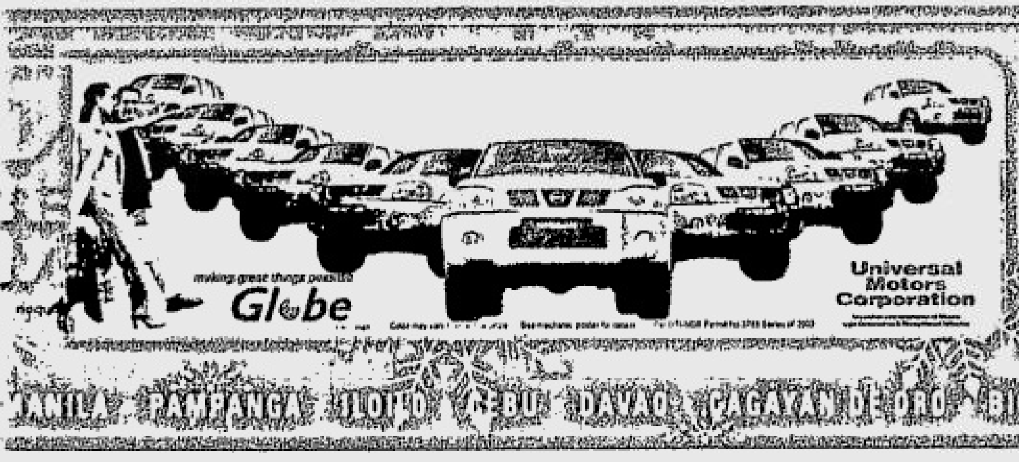
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OPINION

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Clueless

EDITORIAL

ACTOR Fernando Poe Jr. seems to have quickly found out that politics can be bad for one's health. Just a few days after he declared that he would run for president in next year's elections, Poe got an invitation to lay bare his program of government before a gathering of top business executives. He accepted the invitation, but at the last minute he either got cold feet or developed a fever. He failed to show up at the forum for presidential aspirants organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Poe sent Sen. Vicente Sotto III, who had worked hard to convince Poe to stand for election, as his stand-in. The businessmen were not interested in what the former comedian had to say. Not even Sotto's assurance that Poe himself had put the speech together could perk up their curiosity. By the time Sotto started to speak, half of the audience had left.

Everyone should have stayed and listened. Poe's five-page statement may be the longest spiel they will hear from the most laconic presidential wannabe the country has ever seen. And it speaks volumes of how little thought and preparation he will be bringing to the most difficult job this side of the world, if ever he gets elected.

Poe said he had one simple goal and plan: to help uplift the nation and run the government in consultation with all sectors of society. "I believe that a nation cannot be run by just one man but can be led by one," he said. But before that, he added, he had to know what he could do for the various sectors of Philippine society:

"I need you to tell me, the Filipino, whom I'm here to serve, what I can do for you. I need the business sector to tell me how we can improve and strengthen the business climate. I need the political sector to tell me how we can make the rules of governance work for the people. I need labor to tell me what needs they have. I need the Armed Forces and the police to tell me what our country needs to preserve peace and order in our ranks and in our streets. I need our foreign friends to tell me how we, as a Filipino nation, can be worthy allies of world peace and prosperity."

Earlier when he was asked what qualifications he would be bringing to the highest office, Poe replied that he was beholden to no one, that he was not corrupt and that he was sincere. Now we can add candor to his short list of recommendations. His very first speech was an honest admission that he was clueless about the many big problems facing the nation and had therefore no solutions to propose.

Poe can ask the first man he meets on the street what he needs and he will be presented with a very long list: a job, food on the table, a roof over his head, education for his children, security in his home and safety in the streets, health care, and so on and so forth. If he has not heard about them, businessmen have come up with many suggestions on how to improve the business climate, ranging from improved peace and order, more honest and effective governance to consistency in policy, less red tape, better infrastructure, and so on and so forth. If he wants to know what labor needs, he should go to any rally organized by labor groups.

Indeed, anyone who wants to know what needs fixing in this country doesn't have to go through any consultations. A week of reading the newspapers would give him a fairly good idea of the many, varied, urgent and almost insurmountable problems facing the nation and the Filipino people. To ask what people need is to invite being asked in turn: Where have you been?

Everyone, except Poe, would have an idea of what needs to be done. What anyone who aspires for the presidency must tell the people is how he is going to solve those problems or achieve those goals. Poe is asking the Filipino people to give him the chance to lead them. But he has not given even a hint as to where he plans to take them.

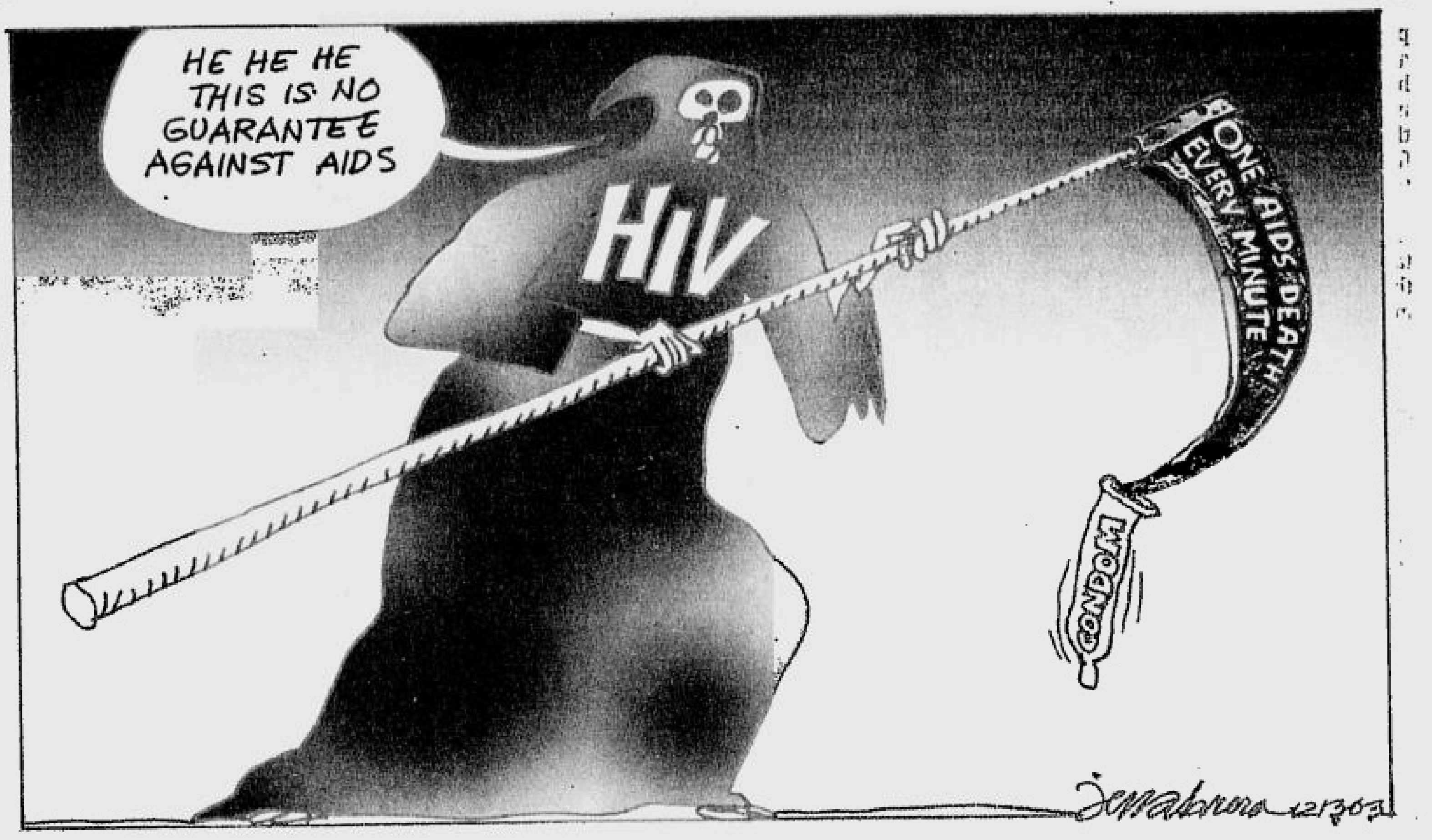
Laws of war

FOREIGN COMMENT

EVIDENTLY the United States doesn't want to take any chances in the war against terrorism, including the part of the war against terrorism that takes place in Guantanamo. The thought of releasing a prisoner because of lack of evidence after which he will fly a plane into another skyscraper is not thrilling.

The official acts of war in Afghanistan, and for that matter in Iraq, are over, and a two-year period to find evidence of criminal acts should be more than sufficient. No matter the kind of terrorism, a state cannot simply lock up people without a trial until they die. Unfortunately the American government cannot be forced to respect the laws of war.

Berlingske Tidende (Copenhagen, Denmark)



Real FPJ is a US citizen, but he is dead

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE REAL Fernando Poe Jr. was an American citizen. What's more, he is dead!

But the Fernando Poe Jr., or FPJ, who is running for president of the Philippines, is very much alive. And he is more Filipino than many local politicians.

FPJ's real name is Ronald Allan Poe, the second of the brood of Fernando Poe Sr., a muscular leading man as popular during his time, as FPJ is now—and Bessie Kelly, an American. Ronnie took the name of his father when he went into acting. His first starrer, while still in his teens, was "Anak ni Palaris," a swashbuckling action hero. Palaris was the film hero who became associated with Poe Sr. in the same way that Panday is now associated with Poe Jr. What better way to star in a sequel of that famous movie series than adopt the name of that movie's leading man? And so Fernando Poe Jr., the actor, was born.

The real Fernando Poe Jr., a brother, also became a movie actor later, but since Ronnie was already famous with that name, he could not use that same name. His screen name became Andy Poe, and he appeared mostly in supporting roles in FPJ movies. Ronnie continued to be known as Fernando Poe Jr. Andy Poe died in 1995. It was Andy Poe who was the American citizen. FPJ the candidate is more Filipino than Heherson Alvarez and Raul Gonzalez put together.

These two Lakas demolition men obviously did not do their homework. Or they knew the truth but their purpose was merely to demolish FPJ. Lakas and the administration are so terrified by FPJ's candidacy, and they cannot find any other legitimate issues against him, that they are willing to invent issues against him.

First, they belittled his lack of a college degree. That didn't click with the masses because most of the members of the *masa* do not have college degrees either, because many college degree holders are failures while school dropouts like FPJ and other entrepreneurs are successes, and also because a number of American presidents who did not finish college either, like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Harry S. Truman, became great presidents.

So they made his being a movie actor another issue. But told that Ronald Reagan (another Ronald, as in Ronald Allan Poe), also a movie actor, was one of the better American presidents who turned around a depressed American economy (which is what ails our own economy now), that didn't click, either. So they blamed him for the drop in the value of the peso. But the *masa* not only does not understand that, they likely want the peso rate to drop farther against the dollar because the dollars being sent home by their relatives abroad would fetch more pesos, so that didn't click either. So now, they desperately grabbed on to his alleged citizenship status as an issue. Now that it has also fallen flat, I wonder what other issue they will dredge up.

* * *

Don't believe the noise coming from the Poe and Ping camps about their respective candidates being determined to run for president, alone if necessary, if neither is chosen as standard bearer for the United Opposition. That is just what it is—noise.

No other candidate has ever admitted that he or she would slide down to a lesser position or get out of the race while negotiations were going on. If they even hinted that, that would weaken their position. So the propaganda is always "it's all or nothing" or "it's now or never," or "I'm running, no matter what." After the negotiations, however, and they have accepted lesser roles, they sing different tunes and their earlier pronouncements are forgotten.

It's the same thing with Poe and Ping. One of them will agree to be a vice presidential candidate or bow out. Both of them have nothing to lose. Ping Lacson still has three years in his Senate term, he can go back to his Senate seat. FPJ can always go back to what he does best and is comfortable with—making movies. After all, he decided to run not because he wanted to but because the people want him to.

I bumped into former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, head of the five-man opposition committee negotiating with Poe and Ping on who of them should be the opposition standard bearer. JPE said the two bets had agreed that only one of them would run. For both of them to run would be the surest way to lose. But which one will it be? That's the big question.

That shouldn't be hard to resolve, should it? Whoever ranks higher in the poll surveys should be the standard bearer. Winnability should be a prime consideration. What's the use of running if you're going to lose anyway? Even if you're the best qualified, if you know you would most likely lose, why take the risk? You would be throwing away your campaign money. On the other hand, if you help the likely winner and he does win, you will share in the spoils.

In the case of Ping, the danger is magnified. If he runs against GMA and he loses, as sure as the sun rises in the east, he would continue to be persecuted in the next administration. Even when he goes back to the Senate, that would continue. On the other hand, if he helps FPJ win, the latter's administration would look kindly on him. Of course, if he becomes the president, it would be he who would be doing the persecuting. That would be sweet revenge. But that is a long shot. Ask Bata Reyes what shot he would rather take: a long shot or a short one, when the target ball is already near the hole.

Principles

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SAW Rodolfo Biazon last Sunday at the convention of the "Alliance of Hope," and was reminded of why I like him. I did say in my columns on the Erap impeachment trial several years ago that I thought he was one of the senators who did very well there. His questions were intelligent and were clearly raised to seek enlightenment and not attention from the cameras. He wasn't a lawyer, but he showed an impeachment trial is not the natural province of lawyers, it was the natural province of a few good people. Seldom are they lawyers.

Though a soldier, he has been critical of GMA's militarist tack, in particular her promotion of the American invasion of Iraq. But that is not surprising because he was the one who put down the coups during Cory's time, earning for himself the reputation of being a staunch defender of the Constitution. His libertarian instincts are healthy, which is the mark of a true soldier.

Next to Raul Roco, who was the star of the show, he was the most loudly applauded last Sunday. For good reason: He had just resigned from the LDP, his home party for the last 11 years, to join the Alliance. Unlike others who bolt their parties, he did not elicit cries of opportunism. He even glinted with heroism. LDP is a powerful group while the Alliance had, until last Sunday, only a strong presidential contender and not much else. It was a huge gamble, and when he said he was doing it for principle, nobody rose to protest.

At no time last Sunday did he try to steal the thunder from his fellows. He trotted to the center of the stage when his name was called and waved enthusiastically to the crowd, flashing a toothy grin. He is enviably sprightly at his age. After that he went to the sidelines, and even after Roco spoke, when reporters and well-wishers swarmed onto the stage, he kept to the wings, entertaining questions there. He can teach not just the candidates in the other parties but those in his newfound one some lessons in class. Or remind them of the Old Testament story about the exalted being humbled and the humble being exalted.

I wish Biazon all the luck in the world. I do hope he makes it—all the way to the top.

Biazon however reminded me of a conversation I had with a Japanese political observer last week. I told him about a conversation I had a couple of years back with a young Japanese journalist who told me you could not hope to become a prime minister in Japan without being at least in your late 60s, which was why their leaders always looked like they came from the Tokugawa dynasty. He laughed and said that was true, but that was because to become a prime minister you had to be work your way to the top. You had to win big in a dozen previous elections going up the ladder. So by the time you ran for prime minister, you really would look like you came from the Tokugawa dynasty.

It went without saying, he said, that you did it through only one party. I asked him if changing parties was unknown, and he said pretty much so. Of course you could, he said, but that was a kiss of death. The first thing the voters would ask is: "Where are your principles?" If you can't be loyal to your party, you can't be loyal to the people. That was the equation. You joined a party like you joined a multinational or got married—for life.

I remember as well in that respect asking an editor of Der Spiegel when I observed the German elections last year if Joschka Fischer could become prime minister if he joined the SPD. Fischer, by most accounts, is the most charismatic and popular political figure in Germany, but he cannot become prime minister because he belongs to a smaller party, the Green Party. The head of the winning party normally goes on to become the prime minister. So why doesn't Fischer leave the Green Party and join the SPD? The Der Spiegel editor mulled that question as though it were the most alien thing in the world. At length he said: "Yes, he could do that. But if he did, he would no longer be charismatic and popular."

Those two conversations show precisely what's wrong with what we have been pleased to call democracy. I wouldn't mind if our politicians left bigger parties for smaller ones on grounds of principle, as Biazon has done. But that doesn't happen, or rarely so. What happens is that our politicians leave their parties for the victorious ones, which is how the big parties become big in the first place. Bolting parties has become so commonplace no opprobrium attaches at all to it. It has become the most natural thing in the world. Nobody cares to ask, "Where are your principles?"

The notion that if we had a two-party system instead of a multiparty one we would not have an epidemic of "turncoatism" is true only up to a point. True enough, before martial law you couldn't become president outside the Nacionalista and Liberal parties, and you made it a point to find a home in one or the other. But it wasn't unusual for people to cross from one to the other side when blocked from becoming the party's standard bearer—and win. Ramon Magsaysay and Ferdinand Marcos did. They both left the Liberal party because the LP incumbent was seeking reelection, joined the Nacionalista, and got the presidential nomination there. The latter aided by the formidable Imelda Marcos who wooed and won the convention delegates. Marcos went on to steal the crown from Diosdado Macapagal.

In both cases, nobody asked: "Where are your principles?" Magsaysay turned his back on independence, turning the country back into an American colony, a restoration unmatched until Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came along. And Marcos turned his back on democracy, mounting a dictatorship.

It's true. If you can't be true to your party, how can you be true to your country?

Doctors' waiting rooms

HIGH BLOOD

Eufemia C. Estrada

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

AS a senior citizen I spend many long hours in my doctors' clinics waiting to hear the word "Next" and my name called.

Most clinics follow the first come, first served policy and it's not unusual to have patients come at six in the morning even if the doctor's clinic hours start at 10. Besides, most doctors come in much later than that after making the rounds of their patients confined in the hospital, coming from a meeting or lecture, or from another hospital or maybe, heaven forbid, a round of golf!

I will be writing about my eye doctor's waiting room. He follows the "*lista*" method but his secretary will only list down the names of patients on the day of the consultation. If the clinic is in the morning, the secretary is in shortly after six and by that time the list has already grown.

A patient from Mandaluyong, for example, sends her driver to list down her name at six in the morning by which time she may be No. 6 in the list.

Patients from the provinces take the dawn trip to be among the early ones. They come by land from Baguio, Nueva Ecijá, Pampanga, Batangas, etc. or by ship or plane from the Visayas and Mindanao. So what's a few more hours of waiting for your turn?

My parking bill once reached P50, meaning it was the fifth hour before my turn came up.

How do you while away the time?

In my eye doctor's waiting room not many resort to reading or working on puzzles since most of the patients are suffering from a cataract, glaucoma or some other eye problem.

You can choose to sit in stony silence, alone with your thoughts and fears, or with a blank mind. Or you can turn the long line of waiting patients with similar eye problems as yours into a support group.

The best way is to socialize. Strike up a conversation with the patient seated next to you. Exchange symptoms, treatments, stories about the old hometown, any subject under the sun.

I know it works. I have had many interesting conversations with fellow patients. Some may be a wee bit reticent at first, but your genuine interest in them will make them open up. You may even end up with some "classmates," patients you bump into when you come for your regular checkup.

My doctor has many patients from the religious sector and I have talked with nuns, priests, fathers, mothers, grandparents, people like you and me who have some eye problem.

I learned that cloistered nuns can go out into the world when they have to see their doctor, and unaccompanied yet! At least I didn't see any "*alalay*" when I met this Carmelite nun who came bearing a two and a half foot statue of their patron, Our Lady of Mediatrix, for the doctor. It now occupies a prominent shelf in the clinic. An ex-nun confided she asked for papal dispensation to leave the convent, not to get married, but because she was not happy with the changes brought about by Vatican II. A woman who was apprehensive as she waited for her laser treatment wanted to know if it hurt and when I assured her it didn't hurt at all except in the pocket (I'd undergone laser treatment for glaucoma), she regained her equanimity. Later, after treatment, as I was about to leave, she took my hands into hers and said she was glad to have met me.

I learned about an alternative lifestyle in a nearby home for the elderly run by religious sisters in a nearby southern town, when I met this psychiatrist who has been a resident for five years. She is only 78 but her family lives abroad.

A woman from Batangas gave me tips on where to get the best *kakanin* (native delicacies) from the cities and towns of Batangas which I had hoped to write about after a tour of the province. Unfortunately, maybe because of the high cost of gasoline, I must have misplaced the slip of notepaper I had jotted it all down in.

But the most exhilarating conversation I had was when I butted in on a prominent man and woman who were on the other side of the Erap impeachment, then very much the talk of the town. We had a spirited dialogue. Before he left the prominent man asked me, "If my son (also prominent in his own right) runs this coming election (last election, not the 2004) will you vote for him?" My answer was a blunt, "No!" The son did not run for that year's election. Hopefully, my "No" helped in that decision.

Chatting up the other patients is good for one's morale.

I have met many patients who tell me one eye is no longer functional but who take this diminishment in stride and continue to live their lives. It gives me courage to face life as the threat of blindness from glaucoma or age-related macular degeneration (ARMD) looms.

Eufemia C. Estrada is in her 70s and used to write a column for the Lifestyle section of the INQUIRER *titled "Cooking Made EC."*

A lifting of the spirit

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I WAS thinking maybe it's time I wrote about the political scene, but thinking about it only plunged me deeper into frustration and depression. So let me write, just for today, on two events that provided not just relief from political developments, but also, improbably, hope, gladness, a lifting of the spirit just in time for this time of year.

I have to thank Vicki Bringas-Ramirez, whose daughter Shaina is a member of the UP Concert Chorus, for sending me tickets to the UPCC's Homecoming Concert last Sunday at the Union Church of Manila.

In seven months of touring the United States and Europe, the Concert Chorus Batch 2003 managed to collect a slew of prizes, including three Gold Prizes (for Mixed, Male and Female Choruses) at the 8th International Choral Days in Germany, finalist for Renaissance Categoria at the Polyphonic Choral Competition in Arezzo, Italy, as well as the Special First Prize, the "People's Choice Award," in the International Folksong Festival also in Arezzo.

And after basking in the UPCC's performance, the audience could only agree with Pastor Alex Aronis' assertion that the UPCC is not just "one of the best chorales in the world," but "THE best in the world!"

The program opened with a selection of competition songs, done *a capella*, including a rousing, soulful rendition of the "Gloria" by Ryan Cayabyab. This section was followed by Gospel and inspirational songs, with choreography by Ernest Hojilla, including excerpts from St. Michael's Mass by, again, Cayabyab, as well as a lively Gospel medley from the movie "Sister Act 2" and the very popular "The Prayer," one of the most applauded numbers.

* * *

AFTER A BRIEF intermission, the UPCC made their entrance with a burst of color in their multi-hued outfits designed by Edgar San Diego. This part of the program was lighthearted, starting with a medley of Broadway songs, then seamlessly segueing to a selection of Philippine folk songs. These included two numbers that won honors for them in Italy: "Iddemdem Mallida," an Itneg tribal folk song, and "Kaming Magmamani," a Visayan folk song sung during the peanut harvest.

Even more accessible to the appreciative audience were the Filipino pop songs, including Gary Granada's humorous take on love "Mabuti Pa Sila," and Ernani Cuenco's perky classic take on the "Kalesa."

Several times the audience was moved to cheers, sighs and exuberant laughter, but what deeply moved us and penetrated to our very souls came at the end, with the "choral response" to the hosts' acknowledgements, as conductor Jai Sabas-Aracama led her young singers in spirited praise with "Amazing Grace."

Sabas-Aracama, quite simply, took our breath away, stunning the audience with her Aretha Franklin-like riffs on this beloved anthem that proved, as nothing else could, that song is the best form of prayer.

I left the Union Church, with my sister Charo and niece Dada, floating on air. My heart felt suddenly open to receive the world's beneficence, driving away, even if only temporarily, all-too-real "vexations of the spirit."

* * *

THE NIGHT before the concert, I was part of an even more personal and intimate celebration, an occasion dubbed "A Celebration of Joy." Joy, as in the emotion evoked by celebrating a person's long life, and also as in "Jesus, Others, Yourself," a "rule" that has been the guide that Lourdes "Nena" Syquia Bautista has tried to emulate all her life.

"Ma'am" Nena Bautista was wife (and now widow) of "Sir" Felix Bautista, a long-time journalism professor at the University of Sto. Tomas, who mentored several generations of journalists and writers. For those of us who were fortunate enough to be part of the staff of The Varsitarian, as well as of his staff in the Archdiocese of Manila's media office in the late 1970s and early 1980s, "Sir" was more than just a professor or boss. He was also a father figure, counselor and booster, critic and tireless (and tiresome!) editor. Ma'am Nena, who taught us literature and theology, became for me an early role model, who showed by her example, that one could be both wife and career woman, mother (of 12!) and concerned citizen, as well as a figure of impeccable taste and refinement.

She was no fashion plate, mind, and I still remember her daughters snickering about their mother's Ilocano frugality and aversion to shopping, but always she managed to be well groomed and exude an air of serenity and poise.

* * *

NOW I know, after listening to her children and friends extol her virtues and to Ma'am Nena herself reflect on her philosophy of "Joy," that her imperturbable aura came, not from style or lifestyle, but from heart and faith.

My friends Peachy and Jess and I, all "*anak sa labas ni* Felix," as Ma'am Nena laughingly introduced us, sighed with envy and not a little concern as we gazed upon Ma'am so lovely and youthful looking in her 80s. Would that we age as gracefully and happily as she has, we said among ourselves, leaving unsaid our real fears that here we were, as yet some distance to go (well, okay, not that much of a distance) before hitting the half-century mark, and we were already looking the worse for wear!

Her oldest son Pet mentioned that he and his 11 siblings had to scale down their preparations from posh hotels to the social hall of Philamlife Parish, in deference to Ma'am Nena's preference for a "simple" party. I don't know too many women who would reject a five-star venue in favor of a parish hall. I mean, if you're going to get older, better do so in style, right?

Then again, maybe that's why at 80, Ma'am Nena Bautista looks as young as she does. I guess a simple, faith-filled life pays off in ways not immediately visible.

Pandays, now and in history

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST week I witnessed wailing and gnashing of teeth following the announcement that Fernando Poe Jr. was running for president. People threatened to migrate elsewhere and I calmly told them to accept the inevitable. One of the lighter moments that gloomy day was when people asked me to write about "Ang Panday" (The Ironsmith). While I have seen the FPJ Panday films on cable TV (and no doubt we will be flooded with reruns as the election draws near) and found them entertaining, I am no movie critic so I will leave erudite commentary to Nestor Torre and Jessica Zafra. Nevertheless I dug into my notes in search of a 16th-century *panday* named Pira.

Panday Pira is found in the fourth chapter of Antonio de Morga's "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas" (first edition, Mexico 1609). This chapter relates the events during the term of Spanish Governor-General Santiago de Vera and makes reference to a foundry run by Panday Pira:

"[de Vera] built the stone fortress of Our Lady of the Way, inside the city of Manila on the land side, and for its defense, he had set up a foundry for the making of artillery under the hands of an old *indio* called Pandapirá, a native of the province of Pampanga. He and his sons served in this line of work until their deaths many years later."

The word "*panday*" in Java, Borneo, and the Philippines means "metal worker" or "ironsmith." How Pandapira became a "cannon-maker" can be traced and credited to Rizal who published an annotated edition of Morga in 1890. Although Morga made only a passing reference to this *indio* artillery maker, Rizal elaborates in his annotation, stressing that:

"That is, an indio who already knew how to found cannons even before the arrival of the Spaniards, hence the epithet 'old.' In this difficult branch of metallurgy, as in others, the present-day Filipinos or the new indios are very much behind the old indios."

In the next chapter, the fifth, on the term of Governor General Gomez Perez Dasmariñas, there is another reference by Morga to the foundry:

"[Perez Dasmariñas] established a foundry for artillery in Manila where, owing to the lack of expert or master founders, few large pieces were made."

Rizal took the opportunity to point out, in a footnote, that the indigenous foundry run by Panday Pira disappeared after the Spanish settled in Manila, conquered from the indios:

"This demonstrates that, when the *indio* Pandapira died, there were no Spaniards who knew how to do what he did, nor were his children as skilled as their father."

Today Panday Pira, the cannon-founder, joins the pantheon of heroes and other "great" Filipinos in school textbooks, despite historical and archaeological evidence to the contrary. In yet another edition of Morga, this time by W.E. Retana in 1909, are longer footnotes on Pandapira that include transcriptions of 16th century archival documents from Seville that refute Rizal's nationalistic assertions that cannon-making was a flourishing indigenous industry. The documents from the colonial government in Manila requesting higher authorities in Mexico to send cannon-makers show that the Filipinos were unable to forge the thick European-style cannons. A letter from Governor Vera on June 26, 1587 to the viceroy in Mexico gives an account of his artillery and requests more:

"I cannot find anyone who knows how to found cannons, because those provided are by *indios* who cannot make large cannons. I request Your Excellency to send from New Spain founders and officers to manufacture cannons."

Retana continues: "This is to say, that the natives did not know how to found large cannons. The 26 large pieces alluded to by De Vera could very well come from the Spanish ships or those well-made by Robles, the Spanish master founder. If Panday Pira and his sons were indeed such experts at making large cannons there would be no reason for De Vera's request."

Robles, he notes elsewhere, died before 1587. Thus, his arrival in the Philippines could be dated to about 1575-1576. Retana takes Filipino historians—above all Rizal—to task for trying to claim too much from so little, by insisting that cannon-making was a flourishing indigenous industry. The documents he cites prove otherwise.

Retana has more to say. He cites an ethnographic article by Ferdinand Blumentritt (whose opinion was held in high esteem by Rizal and other Filipino writers) stating that the pre-Spanish foundry the Spaniards encountered in Manila was run by a Portuguese cannon-maker! It is odd that Rizal, who read practically every word Blumentritt had written on the Philippines, overlooked an important line in "Filipinas en Tiempo de la Conquista (The Philippines at the Time of the Conquest)" which states that the Portuguese taught the Tagalogs the founding of cannons. Blumentritt states further, that cannons were brought to the Philippines by Portuguese adventurers and deserters. He challenged the opinion of other scholars who maintained that this "indigenous" industry could trace its roots to Borneo. Since Rizal chose to ignore this data Retana delivered the *coup de grâce*: "In a word, in the art of metallurgy with relation to the founding of cannons, the Filipinos did not retrogress, on the contrary, they gained, thanks to the training given by the Spaniards."

All this sleuthing leads me to ask: Will the real Panday Pira please stand up?

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Filipinos must get their acts together

EYE ON ASIA

Karim Raslan

WITH FERNANDO Poe Jr.'s candidacy for the presidency finally out in the open, the Philippines looks set to enter yet another period of protracted instability and intense political activity in the run-up to next year's polls. The tension between the *masa* (represented by Poe and Joseph Estrada) and their masters will once again undermine the republic's chances of escaping its interminable nightmare.

Still, whoever occupies Malacañang has got to address the fast-eroding competitiveness of the Philippines in areas that were once considered a shoo-in: call centers and back-office services.

The Philippines is also in danger of losing one of its few remaining competitive advantages—its close relationship with the United States. As one of the few nations in Asia with a substantial English-language speaking population and a lively (most would say hyperactive) democracy, the Philippines has long held itself out as the United States' most enduring friend in Asia.

However, there is a new challenger to its position as America's closest ally. India and Indians are changing. After decades of slumbering, the subcontinent and its billion plus population (including its substantial diaspora) are waking up and with surprising consequences.

Recent events underline the extent to which India has departed from the Nehru socialism of its immediate post-independence years as well as its long-standing commitment to Non-Alignment Movement and traditional wariness of the United States.

In September, New Delhi shocked the Muslim world by hosting the Israeli Premier Ariel Sharon and only last week an ethnic Indian-American Republican called Piyush "Bobby" Jindal narrowly lost a gubernatorial contest in the US state of Louisiana. Furthermore Stanchart Bank reported that the Indian GDP was slated to grow at over 7 percent in 2003-04. Finally the back-office services industry had expanded by over 25 percent in the first three months of 2003, adding some 130,000 jobs, taking sector employment to some 650,000.

Filipinos must remember that while India's development is extremely uneven, it remains a land of vast opportunity. Bangalore, Mumbai or New Delhi more than compensate for the squalor and lawlessness (the Indians call it dacoitry) of states such as Bihar and Gujarat.

Certainly the whole of Southeast Asia is going to have to adjust to a far more assertive and confident India—an India that wants to be recognized as being on par with the other great emerging Asian power, China. At the same time India is also becoming more overtly western and American in its orientation. This shift will have striking implications for the region as the two giants (along with the United States) seek to influence Southeast Asia.

There is distinctly a racist edge to the way Southeast Asians have observed and dealt with India in the past. This must change and fast. For decades we have looked down on Indians—seeing the terrible poverty as a damning indictment of their country's failures. As such we are not entirely familiar with the idea of wealthy, worldly and successful Indians like Naryana Murthy of Infosys, the actress Ashwariya Rai or the New York-based publisher, Sonny Mehta.

We've long identified India with backwardness. Over the past 50 years or so a combination of Nehru's socialism, a sclerotic bureaucracy and non-alignment in geo-political terms has left India on sidelines as the Asia-Pacific boomed. In the 1980s and '90s India stumbled as China streaked ahead. For example India—with a population of 1.1 billion—had external trade of only US$110 billion—noticeably less than Malaysia with over US$175 billion in trade.

However, conventional thinking in Delhi has changed and C Raja Mohan, a columnist for a highly respected newspaper, The Hindu, has written a fascinating account of these trends in his recently published book "Crossing the Rubicon." The author places a great deal of emphasis on what he considers to be India's commitment to the ideas promoted by European "Enlightenment" thinkers of the 18th century.

In doing so he groups India with the nations of the western world and Israel—societies that have to his mind done three things—separated between religion and state, adopted and promoted democracy and finally embraced modernity as symbolized by the worlds of science and technology.

Interestingly the author also distinguishes India from China and the Islamic world. He argues that these two civilizations are incompatible with the Enlightenment experiment. In doing so he covertly reaffirms the fact that India has sided with the United States against both China and the Muslim world. Of course, many people might argue that the ruling BJP party's avowedly of Hindu orientation and ultra-conservative religious inclinations make them an extremely dubious advocate of secularism.

Both 9/11 and the US-led war on terror has had a searing impact on the way India views the world. The Indian Premier Atal Bihari Vajpayee identified himself immediately with the American cause going so far as to offer military support to the Americans. This can be explained in part by the country's long-running insurgency in the majority Muslim state of Kashmir as well as an underlying anti-Muslim bias which is in itself linked to India's historic rivalry with Pakistan. As America has grown more wary of Pakistan, India has used the opportunity to embed itself more closely with Washington, D.C.

The shift toward the United States has been accompanied by a tacit recognition within Washington circles of India's vast economic potential as well as its possible role as a counterweight to China—the one country that the United States remains fearful of. This development is also reinforced by the growing clout of American-Indians who now constitute a far wealthier and more well-connected network than their Filipino equivalents.

US-Indian relations are also being forged in business and people-to-people ties. The rapid growth of software industries both in Silicon Valley and Bangalore has created hundreds of thousands of new jobs. The advent of telephone call-centers servicing US companies has created a demand for people with a familiarity of American popular culture. In essence Indians are realizing the value of economic openness that those in East Asia have long taken for granted and in doing so they are winning contracts from their Filipino competitors.

While the economic connections are strengthening, there are hurdles to future growth. Indian call centers are taking jobs away from Americans and Europeans. HSBC's decision last month to relocate over 4,000 back-office jobs from the United Kingdom to India caused a firestorm in the British media. The collapse of the Internet bubble and heightened US paranoia has made the lives of those recently settled in the United States far more difficult.

India's shift away from Russia and its embrace of the United States has altered the way Americans view Asia. As India cozies up to the United States, the Philippines must manage the economic consequences or risk the chance of being sidelined forever.

Sectoral representatives also in town councils

I WOULD like to congratulate the INQUIRER for printing the commentary of Denis Murphy titled, "Powerlessness is the problem" last Nov. 28, 2003. Once again, he shares with the broader public the development wisdom that he has gained from some 30 years of working with the poor.

As our high-profile presidential candidates scramble to be the *makamasa* personality who would lead the masses from poverty, they would do well to heed Murphy's words. The poor do not need a president full of charm and empty promises. When organized, they can do a great deal toward resolving their problems themselves. Rightly, Murphy calls for "building laws and ways of making decisions and provisions for including the voices of the... organized poor."

In fact, such mechanisms are constitutionally mandated, but because they challenge existing power holders by including the voices of the poor, they are unimplemented. One example is local sectoral representation (LSR), which is also provided for in the Local Government Code of 1991. This provides for reserved seats for sectoral representatives in all the *sanggunians* from municipality to province. The sectoral representatives will be fielded by organized groups of "marginalized and underrepresented" sectors, who will then be elected at large to the *sanggunian*. Instead of the representative, it will really be the organization that will "run," thus highlighting the importance of platforms and programs that will address the concerns of the poor.

Such democratizing measures are met with resistance. A bill to enable LSR was passed by the House of Representatives last June, but in the Senate it is languishing in the committee chaired by Sen. Edgardo Angara. Let's just hope that before electoral fever is out of control, our *makamasa* politicians remember the work they should be doing now, and pass this legislation. Powerlessness is the problem, but LSR is a solution!

—NINA ISZATT,
policy advocacy officer,
Kaisahan tungo sa Kaunlaran
ng Kanayunan at Repormang
Pansakahan, 3 Mahabagin St.,
Teachers' Village, Quezon City

Christ is in us and in our lives

"IF the Lord does not build the house, the work of the builders is useless; if the Lord does not protect the city, it does no good for the sentries to stand guard." (Psalm 127:1)

In these critical times it is necessary to meditate on this Psalm and ask ourselves: Are we putting the Lord in charge of our country and of our lives?

It is time for churches, politicians, media and each one of us to go back to the basics; to learn once more from the Bible God's plan for our country and for the world. If we do not plan our lives and our country's future according to His plan, we work in vain.

In Colossians 1:15-20, St. Paul tells us that God created everything in heaven and on earth through Christ, the seen and unseen things, including spiritual powers, lords, rulers and authorities. God created the whole universe through Christ and for Him, and in union with Him all things have their proper place. He is the head of the body, the church (the people of God); He is the head of the body's life. Through Christ, God decided to bring the universe back to Himself.

God has empowered each one of us to work according to His plan: "Christ is in you, which means that you will share in the glory of God." (v. 27) God's great plan for the world is Christ. "He is the key that opens all of the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge." (2:3)

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 1, he tells us that because God loves us He has given us the free gift of salvation and He has made us His real sons and daughters. As a community He has made us the People of God. He has a special mission for each one of us to fulfill in the accomplishment of His plan for the world. In Ephesians 2:10, he says: "God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus He has created us for a life of good deeds, which He has already prepared for us to do."

Christianity is not just a matter of going to Mass every Sunday. It is a life of dedication and consecration to the accomplishment of God's plan for the world, for the Philippines and for ourselves.

If we do not acknowledge that Christ is in us, and that we are on a special mission for God, all is lost.

St. Paul admonishes us as follows: "Since you have accepted Christ Jesus as Lord, live in union with Him. Keep your roots deep in Him, build your lives on Him as you were taught. And be filled with thanksgiving." (Colossians 2:6 -7)

—EDWARD M. KELLY,
P.O. Box 3037, Manila

Putting words in his mouth

I WAS dismayed and irritated by the front-page article ("BSP chief blamed for peso fall," PDI, 12/1/03) which claims that I had blamed Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura for the peso's rapid fall.

I certainly did not pin the blame for the peso's depreciation on the Bangko Sentral governor. I was reacting to the Bangko Sentral statement that it will be going after peso speculators and my comment was, "Why only now, after all, they have all the tools to have gone after such speculators even earlier." I also pointed out to your reporter, Gil Cabacungan, that the peso depreciation cannot be attributed to only one factor such as the announcement of Fernando Poe Jr. of his intention to run for the presidency in the May 2004 elections. I did tell him that it is a combination of factors including the narrower differential between the peso and dollar interest rates, the resignation of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, the possible downgrade of the Philippines' credit ratings by Moody's Investor Services, etc.

I think it is unfair that words are being put in my mouth when I did not say things that I was supposed to have said.

—JOSE L. CUISIA JR.,
president and CEO,
Philam Life, Makati City

Mr. Cuisia was referring to the BSP when asked about the speculators. The reporter replaced the word "BSP" with "he," referring to the BSP governor. We apologize for the error.—Ed.

Drivers who don't obey rules, cops who don't enforce them

LAST Oct. 30 at around 7:30 in the evening, I had to brave the strong rains to get to the airport to fetch my wife. As I stopped at the intersection near the Airport Road, a PNP Traffic Management Patrol Car No. 055 also stopped beside me and we waited for the red light to change.

The driver of the car on my other side decided that he couldn't wait, so he drove off to beat the red light. The patrol car did not do anything. Then the motorcycle beside me decided to do the same. Still, the police car just stayed there doing nothing. Then an airport van from across the street crossed the intersection, beating the red light on his side and still, the patrol car did nothing.

A few vehicles from our side decided they too couldn't wait, so about three vehicles crossed the intersection on a red light. Still, Patrol Car No. 055 didn't budge.

The government spends millions to provide our traffic enforcers the equipment to do their job effectively. Unfortunately, many of our traffic enforcers are deaf and blind on the streets. If this is what we get from the PNP Traffic Management force, then the country would be better off if they sell all these expensive cars and spend the money to build more public school classrooms.

With non-discipline such as in the above incident, is it a wonder that we are where we are?

—NOEL CARPIO,
1 Molave St.,
Ramax Subdivision,
Diliman, Quezon City

Unresolved suit of UP postgraduate student

LAST July, I intended to file a lawsuit against the University of the Philippines, particularly the Department of English, in the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City. Until now, however, my lawsuit has not been filed because justice grinds very slowly in this country, especially since I am appealing as a pauper litigant. My case is with lawyer Michael Amdengan of the Public Attorneys Office of Quezon City Hall, who is taking a long time in studying and familiarizing himself with my complaints. The slow process must be rooted in the fact that an evil system will protect itself.

The Department of English has committed a series of blunders against me since the time I was preparing for my comprehensive examinations way back in 1992 for my doctorate in Comparative Literature. When I asked the present chair of the department not only for more information but also for an explanation concerning these blunders, the department refused to give either additional information or the necessary explanations.

Both the chancellor and the president of UP seem to be protecting the Department of English because, when my case was elevated to them, they refused to order the department to give an explanation, which should have cleared matters up. I do not know why UP and the Department of English refuse to be transparent, making their motive and intention questionable.

—EMMANUEL C. WIJANGCO,
Block 1, Lot 1,
Ivory Executive Homes,
West Fairview, Quezon City

Fighting drugs at the barangay level

THE SUCCESSFUL launching of the Barangay Anti-Drug Committee (Badac) Congress recently at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City, surely gave valuable lessons to the officialdom on how to handle the drug problem. Thus, the government should be able to contain the problem of illegal drugs more effectively and efficiently.

The decision of President Macapagal-Arroyo ("It's all-out war against drugs," PDI, 10/29/03) to bring the anti-drug campaign to the nation's barangays is a bold step toward the realization of the government's earnest drive to check this problem. Like the barangay council officials, Sangguniang Kabataan officials like me are strongly supporting the President on this matter. As youth leaders, we are duty-bound to take action against drug users and peddlers.

We can no longer remain silent about an issue that concerns the health and welfare of our people. Today, there are 3.4 million drug users in the Philippines and Filipinos are the third biggest users of shabu in the world. We find this situation unacceptable.

Heightening public awareness on the vitality of anti-drug prevention is a shared task of the national government, the barangay, the SK and the entire citizenry. It is thus encouraging to note that the Badac Congress was attended by more than 10,000 barangay officials. This once again demonstrates the united efforts of grass-roots officials in arousing the consciousness among our people.

After going back to their constituents, these barangay officials should double their efforts in their anti-drug abuse drive. The eradication of the drug problem should be a major concern of all in the barangay, its officials and the rest of us.

—LEONARDO Q. BAYAN JR.,
president and city councilor,
Sangguniang Kabataan Federation,
Baguio City

UP faculty panel ought to resign

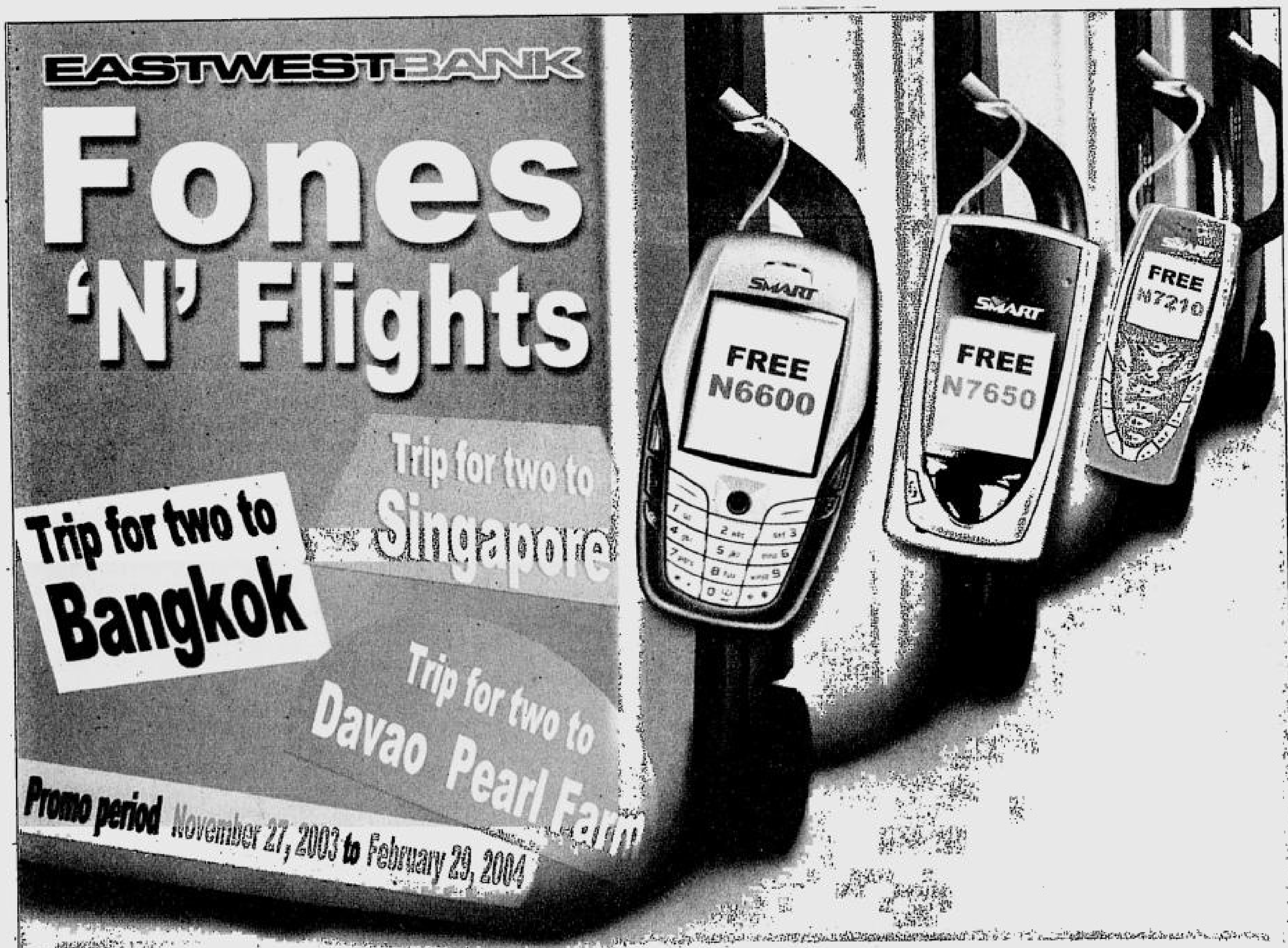
I AM an alumnus of the UP system being a member of UP Medicine Class '76.

If what Miriam Defensor-Santiago stated in the INQUIRER article: "Miriam: AR's death 'honorable,'" PDI, 11/24/03, is true that the faculty panel at UP which conducted (the) interview attacked him with politically loaded questions like: "What is your reaction to the charge that your mother is insane?", then I am appalled that this is being allowed in the University of the Philippines. Such a question and its accompanying attitude have no place at all in an interview for admission, specially in an academic institution that prides itself in academic freedom.

I am not an apologist for Santiago's politics and behavior, but I certainly do not hold that the sons and daughters of political figures should be held accountable for their parents' political stand or perceived shortcomings.

I call on that faculty member to resign if he or she indeed posed that question in that interview, and if he or she refuses to, then the whole UP Law faculty panel should be held accountable, for in their silence, they have given their acquiescence.

—RAMON P. PATERNO,
bpaterno@info.com.ph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Smart Amazing Phone	P 800	P 20,000	24 months
Nokia 7650	P 1,335	P 30,000	24 months
Ericsson T-610	P 1,995	P 30,000	18 months
Nokia 6220	P 2,665	P 30,000	18 months
Nokia 6600	P 2,665	P 35,000	18 months
Ericsson P800	P 3,500	P 50,000	18 months

Note: The required deposit balance shall be on hold-out and cannot be withdrawn by the depositor for a period of 18 or 24 months from the date of redemption.

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Example: November ADB vs. December ADB; December ADB vs. January ADB; and so on. If the account does not reflect any incremental ADB increase, the account will not earn raffle entries for that particular month. The higher the ADB amount, the more raffle entries for the depositor and the higher the chances of winning.

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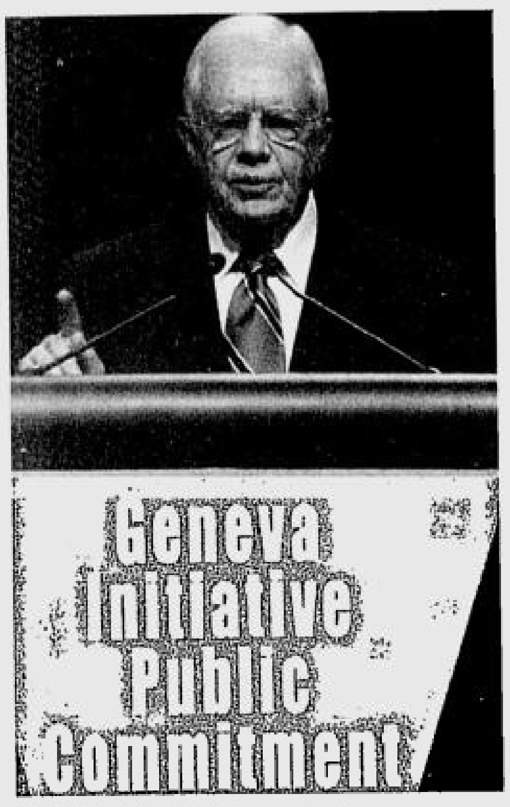
The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Alternative Mideast peace plan hailed



CARTER: Promising foundation for peace REUTERS

GENEVA—Hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians joined Nobel Peace Prize winners for a ceremony filled with song and hope, celebrating an unofficial peace accord intended to guide their peoples out of conflict.

The "Geneva accord" has not been endorsed by either the Palestinians or Israel. But the plan has raised hopes that there may still be a way out of more than three years of violence.

The proposal tackles issues that have torpedoed other peace efforts: the fate of Israeli settlements, the borders of a Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees.

"The alternative, and the only alternative, to this initiative is sustained and permanent violence," former US President Jimmy Carter told the conference. "It is unlikely that we shall ever see a more promising foundation for peace."

The Geneva plan has been welcomed by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and European leaders. The Israeli and Palestinian organizers of an alternative peace plan are set to meet with Powell in Washington in the next week or so.

Frustration over the continuing violence led activists to draft the Geneva accord, which envisions a Palestinian state based roughly on the borders before the 1967 Mideast war. Most Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be dismantled. It divides sovereignty in Jerusalem, but avoids a large-scale return to Israel by Palestinians who fled or were driven out in the 1948-49 war that followed Israel's creation.

"(It's) a clenched-teeth compromise with painful concessions on both sides," said Israeli author Amos Oz, who was a part of the talks.

Monday's event, hosted by actor Richard Dreyfuss, included performances by Palestinian and Israeli musicians and optimistic speeches from the accord's brokers.

Two Nobel Peace laureates, Northern Ireland peace negotiator John Hume and former Polish President Lech Walesa, spoke of their successful efforts to resolve conflicts in their countries.

In Washington, the US state department praised the effort but emphasized that it stands by the "road map" peace plan.

"We welcome efforts such as these... to introduce issues, discuss issues and consider issues that have to be dealt with down the road," it said.

The road map, meant to end three years of violence and pave the way toward an independent Palestinian state by 2005, forbids any new Israeli "settlement activity." It also requires the Palestinians to dismantle militant groups, which they refuse to do. US envoy William Burns met with Israeli officials Monday in hopes of reviving the plan.

In a dramatic turnaround after a lukewarm initial response, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat sent a message warmly praising the Geneva plan, calling it "a brave initiative that opens the door to peace."

However, he did not explicitly endorse the agreement.

Members of Israel's government have called the plan subversive and criticized it for not explicitly ruling out the "right of return" for Palestinian outside Israel.

"Creating the impression that this is some sort of alternative... causes some damage to Israel and is just a repetition of mistakes," said Raanan Gissin, an adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. "There's no giving up of the right of return. There's no mention of the Jewish people having the right to a Jewish state in their ancestral homeland."

There was no formal signing of the agreement at Monday's event, but following their speeches, former Israeli Justice Minister Yossi Beilin and former Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo clasped hands bringing the audience to its feet amid thunderous applause. *AP*

Militant killed in new raid

JERUSALEM — Israeli troops on Tuesday killed an armed Palestinian as he tried to flee and blew up two houses of suspected militants in a nearby West Bank village, the military said.

It was the second West Bank raid in as many days after a relative lull. On Monday, Israeli troops killed three Hamas fugitives and a 9-year-old boy in the town of Ramallah, and also blew up an apartment building, leaving 60 people homeless.

Palestinians warned the renewed military operations could torpedo attempts by the Palestinian Authority to persuade militants to halt attacks on Israelis.

Negotiations involving several militant groups are to begin in Cairo later this week. "The latest Israelis escalation seriously threatens the dialogue in Cairo and puts serious obstacles in front of taking a decision to implement calm," said Ahmad Ghneim, a delegate from Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. *AP*

Kashmiris rejoice, reunite

KARIN, Pakistan—A ceasefire in place, the people of this divided Kashmiri village—separated by the fast-flowing Neelum River that also marks the frontier between India and Pakistan—congregated this week on both sides of the icy channel, shouting greetings to relatives and hurling letters wrapped around stones.

The reunions on Monday would have been unthinkable before a ceasefire reached last week by the uneasy neighbors, who have fought two wars over Kashmir since gaining independence from Britain in 1947.

In addition to the ceasefire, India and Pakistan agreed on Monday to resume airline overflight and landing rights by Jan. 1, two years after the South Asian nuclear rivals ended all transportation links while on the brink of war. *AP*

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US military says Iraqi insurgents displaying greater coordination

SAMARRA, Iraq—One of the bloodiest engagements since the fall of Saddam Hussein showed a new, deadlier side of the Iraqi insurgency: stepped up, coordinated assaults by groups of guerrillas bent on battle rather than a hit-and-run attack, the US military said.

"Here it seems they had the training to stand and fight," said US Capt. Andy Deponai, whose tank was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade during the firefight on Sunday in Samarra.

But residents disputed US assertions that dozens of Iraqi fighters died, saying fewer than 10 were killed and that most of those were civilians.

The well-coordinated ambushes signaled an escalation of guerrilla tactics, although the attack in Samarra, north of Baghdad, was unsuccessful. A dozen cars lay gutted and wrecked in the streets on Monday, and bullet holes pocked many buildings. A mosque and a kindergarten also were damaged.

US Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said that in one of the ambushes, a dozen attackers dashed out of a mosque and opened fire on US military vehicles. They also fired from alleyways and rooftops.

"It was a large group of people," Kimmitt said in Baghdad. "Are we looking at this one closely? Yes. Is this something larger than we've seen over the past couple of months? Yes. Are we concerned about it? We'll look at it and take appropriate measures in future operations."

Insurgents struck elsewhere as well Monday. West of Baghdad, gunmen ambushed an American military convoy, killing one soldier, the US military said. The attack with small arms fire occurred near Habbaniyah, 80 km west of Baghdad, the military said.

A US Army general said Iraqi insurgents in Baghdad appeared to have a central leadership that financed attacks and instructed eight to 12 rebel bands operating in the city when to attack and when to lie low.

But Brig. Gen. Martin Dempsey said the instructions were not specific.

"The manner of attack is up to the individual bands as long as the efforts disrupt and discredit the US-led coalition and any progress it has made," said Dempsey, who commands the US Army's 1st Armored Division, which controls Baghdad and the surrounding region.

He said he believed a recent lull in attacks in Baghdad stemmed from an order to refrain from action during coalition offensives against guerrilla targets.

They are joined, he said, by itinerant terrorists, many associated with al-Qaida, the terror network headed by Osama bin Laden.

The fighting in Samarra, 95 km north of the capital, represented a greater level of coordination in the Iraqi insurgency, although US forces said they had anticipated the attacks and blunted them with superior firepower.

Deponai said he was surprised by the scale of the attack on the convoys, which were carrying bundles of new Iraqi currency, and that 30 to 40 assailants lay in wait—armed with rocket-propelled grenades—near each of the two banks where the money was being delivered. *AFP*

Rumsfeld awarded 'Foot in Mouth' prize

RUMSFELD

LONDON—A bizarre comment by US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on the hunt for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction was awarded the "Foot in Mouth" prize on Monday by Britain's Plain English Campaign.

Rumsfeld, renowned for his uncompromising tough talking, received the prize for the most baffling comment by a public figure.

"Reports that say something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know," Rumsfeld told a press briefing.

"We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know."

John Lister, spokesperson for the campaign that strives to have public information delivered in clear, straightforward English, said: "We think we know what he means. But we don't know if we really know."

Although Rumsfeld's comments were made at a press briefing in February 2002, they were nominated for this year's award.

Rumsfeld, whose boss US President George W. Bush is often singled out by language critics for his sometimes unusual use of English, took the booby prize ahead of a bizarre effort from actor-turned-politician Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"I think that gay marriage is something that should be between a man and a woman," was the odd statement from the new California governor.

Previous holders of the award include US actress Alicia Silverstone and Britain's Chancellor Gordon Brown. Last year's winner was actor Richard Gere. *Reuters*

WorldBriefs

Giant Saddam busts dismantled

BAGHDAD—Workers on Tuesday began dismantling the four giant bronze busts of Saddam Hussein that have long dominated Baghdad's skyline, in yet another move aimed at eradicating the former leader's influence. Workers using a construction crane were seen atop one of the four statues of a glowering Saddam wearing a tropical helmet that have adorned the Republican Palace since the 1980s. The US-led Coalition Provisional Authority moved into the palace in May after the fall of Baghdad. Hundreds of Saddam's statues and murals that used to adorn street corners and buildings throughout the capital were removed or obliterated immediately after the arrival of US troops. But the four busts atop the palace building have remained in place because their dismantling required a complicated technical operation. *AP*

Bush OKs research on new nukes

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush has put his stamp of approval on a bill allocating millions of dollars for research into new types of nuclear weapons and for bolstering readiness at the Nevada nuclear test site. White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said Monday that Bush had signed the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2004, which allocates $7.5 million to study the possibility of developing so-called "bunker-busting" nuclear bombs that officials say would enhance America's ability to destroy underground command and control centers and hidden arms depots. *AFP*

Caught playing computer games

HONG KONG—The Hong Kong education chief came under fire from opposition politicians for allegedly playing computer games as he sat through a lengthy legislative meeting. The South China Morning Post quoted a student union leader, Raymond Mak Ka-chun, as saying he was sitting behind the education secretary, Arthur Li, during the session that lasted about four hours on Monday and he saw Li playing games on a hand-held computer. Li declined comment on whether he was playing games, the Post reported Tuesday, but he insisted he had paid attention. *AP*

Convicted polygamist appeals

SALT LAKE CITY—A lawyer for a Utah man with five wives argued that his bigamy convictions should be thrown out following a Supreme Court decision decriminalizing gay sex. The nation's high court in June struck down a Texas sodomy law, ruling that what gay men and women do in the privacy of their homes is no business of government. It's no different for polygamists, argued Tom Green's attorney, John Bucher, to the Utah Supreme Court on Monday. The state said the court should reject the appeal. "He preys on young girls," Assistant Utah Attorney General Laura Dupaix said. "This case is about a man who marries young girls and calls it religion." *AP*

No contact with Air Force One

WASHINGTON—British Airways said none of its pilots made contact with President George W. Bush's plane during its secret flight to Baghdad, contradicting White House reports of a mid-air exchange that nearly prompted Bush to call off his trip. BA spokesperson Honor Verrier said two BA aircraft were in the area at the time and neither radioed the president's plane to ask if it was Air Force One. The White House had no immediate comment on the discrepancy. Bush aides recounted with excitement last week the moment during the flight to Baghdad when they said a BA pilot thought he spotted the president's blue and white Boeing 747 from his cockpit. It was one of the most suspenseful moments during Bush's secret flight to Baghdad, according to the White House, and with just three hours to go prompted the Secret Service to check if his mission remained a secret. *Reuters*

Costliest overnight lodging

NEW YORK—Forget puttin' on the Ritz. Try puttin' on the Mandarin Oriental. New York's new Mandarin Oriental 250-room hotel offers a suite with a $12,595 nightly pricetag, beating out the Ritz-Carlton by almost $100 as the costliest overnight lodging in the Big Apple. The Mandarin's Presidential Suite, set to open to the public in January, includes a full kitchen, formal dining room, living room with high-definition flat-screen LCD televisions, baby grand piano, panoramic views of Central Park and the Hudson River and Asian-themed art worth almost $1 million. The wood-paneled suite includes high-tech surround sound, an entertainment system, wet bar, office/media room and French-marbled foyer floors. The master bath has a two-person steam shower and a deep-soaking tub overlooking the park. *Reuters*

War on drugs a success, says Thaksin

BANGKOK — Shrugging off accusations that police had been encouraged to act outside the law, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on Tuesday declared a bloody 10-month war on drugs a success, saying it had crippled the business.

Thaksin told reporters that the campaign—in which more than 2,000 suspected traffickers and peddlers were killed—had rid the country of a decades-old threat to its social fabric.

"We have done quite a good job in less than a year on a problem left to fester for 20 years," he said. "Narcotics are now not a grave social and national menace as in the past.

"But we will not stop here. It will be a relentless, continuing campaign," he said.

Thai and foreign human rights groups have accused police of killing suspected dealers, a charge the government denies. It says most of the deaths resulted from dealers fighting each other.

"We have received several hundred complaints from people related to those affected by the extrajudicial killings and by summary seizure of assets of drugs suspects," said Charun Ditha-appichai of the National Human Rights Committee.

Charun said the independent body had no objection to a war on drugs, but objected to the way it had been carried out. *Reuters*

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Killing of 2 businessmen alarms Seoul

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The South Korean government, alarmed by the killing of two South Korean businessmen last Saturday in Lapulapu City, is now studying the issuance of an advisory against travel to Cebu if the killing is not solved immediately.

Augusto Go, South Korean honorary consul in Cebu, said he received this information from one of the assistants of South Korean Ambassador Son Sang Ha, who was in Cebu last Monday afternoon.

Go said the Korean government is very distressed with the report of the killings particularly since the killings were headline news in many South Korean newspapers.

Go said the South Koreans residing in Cebu were worried over their safety and might leave the province because of the killings.

He urged the authorities especially the Lapulapu City Police Office and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) 7 to solve the killings as soon as possible to restore the confidence of the Koreans in Cebu.

"This will not only affect Cebu's economy but the entire country as well," Go said.

Go said there are about 1,000 South Koreans who are living in Cebu, and most of them in Lapulapu City.

Go said he also learned that 50 to 70 percent of the occupants of the two top hotels on Mactan Island, the Shangri-La Mactan and Waterfront Hotel, are South Korean tourists.

South Koreans have been topping the tourist arrivals in Cebu. Cebu Pacific provides at least three direct flights between Cebu and Seoul every week to accommodate the growing tourist arrivals from South Korea.

Go said he did not believe the initial information gathered by NBI-7 Acting Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda that the victims had debts amounting to about P50 million.

"We still have to get hard facts on this," he said.

The Lapulapu police earlier raised two possible angles in the killing—business rivalry and personal grudge.

Esmeralda said the killers could have been hired by somebody who had an axe to grind against the victims.

Ambassador Son, accompanied by Go, met separately with Lapulapu City Mayor Arturo Radaza and Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia on Monday to seek their assistance for the immediate solution of the killings.

The victims, Cho Yoon Sik and Kim Suk Chin, were on their way home on board a rented Mitsubishi Space Wagon along Barangay Marigondon when ambushed Sunday evening by at least three armed men riding a motorcycle.

Cho and Kim co-owned the Shabu Shabu Ox, a Korean restaurant in the Marina Mall in Lapulapu City.

Go said the victims originally run the same business on Boracay Island.

RP's only science city observes 3rd anniversary

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—This city observes its third charter anniversary this month with a 12-day celebration that will feature science and innovation exposition, cultural shows, a civic parade and other activities.

Mayor Nestor Alvarez said the exposition at the City Hall Compound here would be the first activity to start the celebration. Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. and Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas Joson III will open the exposition today.

Alvarez said the Philharmonic Orchestra with tenor Nolyn Cabahug, soprano Rachel Gerodias and the various choirs in this city would treat residents to a cultural show on Dec. 5.

The UP Concert Chorus is featured in the "Festival of Voices" on Dec. 7, the Philippine Ballet Theater in the "Sayaw ng Bayan" on Dec. 12, and the UP Jazz Ensemble in the Jazz Festival on Dec. 16.

A civic parade is featured on the charter day anniversary on Dec. 9.

Joining the parade are representatives of research and development agencies, with their respective floats depicting Muñoz as the "only Science City in the country moving onward through cooperation and people's participation."

This city started as a former sitio and later a barangay of Guimba town. It became a regular town in 1913 and a component city through Republic Act 8977 on Nov. 7, 2000. Residents ratified the conversion of the former Muñoz town into a city on Dec. 9, 2000. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

₱10M in smuggled rice seized at Mandaue warehouse

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Some P10 million worth of rice believed to have been smuggled from Vietnam was seized by elements of the Enforcement and Security Service (ESS) of the Bureau of Customs in Cebu at a warehouse in Mandaue City at dawn yesterday.

The shipment reportedly came from Vietnam on board cargo vessel MV Jupiter, owned by Cebu-based MY Shipping Lines, but the Cebu Coast Guard failed to locate the vessel.

Cebu Coast Guard Commander Elson Hermogino said it was possible that the unloading was made late evening of Monday. That could be the reason the vessel was already gone when they conducted the search yesterday.

ESS commander Capt. Isidro Estrera said the smuggled rice carried by MV Jupiter was not immediately detected because the vessel was anchored some 3 kilometers from the Cebu Port area.

He said the unloading of the smuggled rice was done at the sea. The sacks of rice were loaded directly to 10-wheel trucks that were brought there by barges, also owned by MY Shipping Line. The barges then proceeded to the privately owned F.F. Cruz Wharf in Mandaue City, after which the loaded trucks proceeded to a warehouse located in Subangdaku, Mandaue City.

The ESS operation began at around 3 a.m. yesterday after Estrera's men detected the 10-wheel trucks coming out of the F. F. Cruz Wharf. Estrera's men followed the trucks until they arrived at the warehouse.

Estrera said seven trucks were seized at the warehouse while three others were seized at the Cebu International Port area, presumably while on their way to the warehouse.

Only three drivers were held for questioning, as the other drivers abandoned the truck when they reached the warehouse, Estrera said.

Soldiers arrest kidnap gang member in Maguindanao

COTABATO CITY—Acting on a tip from civilians, military agents arrested on Monday a suspected member of the dreaded Pentagon kidnap for ransom gang in Maguindanao.

Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga, 6th Infantry Division chief, lauded civilians who tipped off the Army's 66th Infantry Battalion that resulted in the arrest of Gabi Mamalimping, a field officer of Pentagon.

"While one of the gang members was neutralized, there's no reason to celebrate yet and lower our guards," Senga told radio station dxMS here.

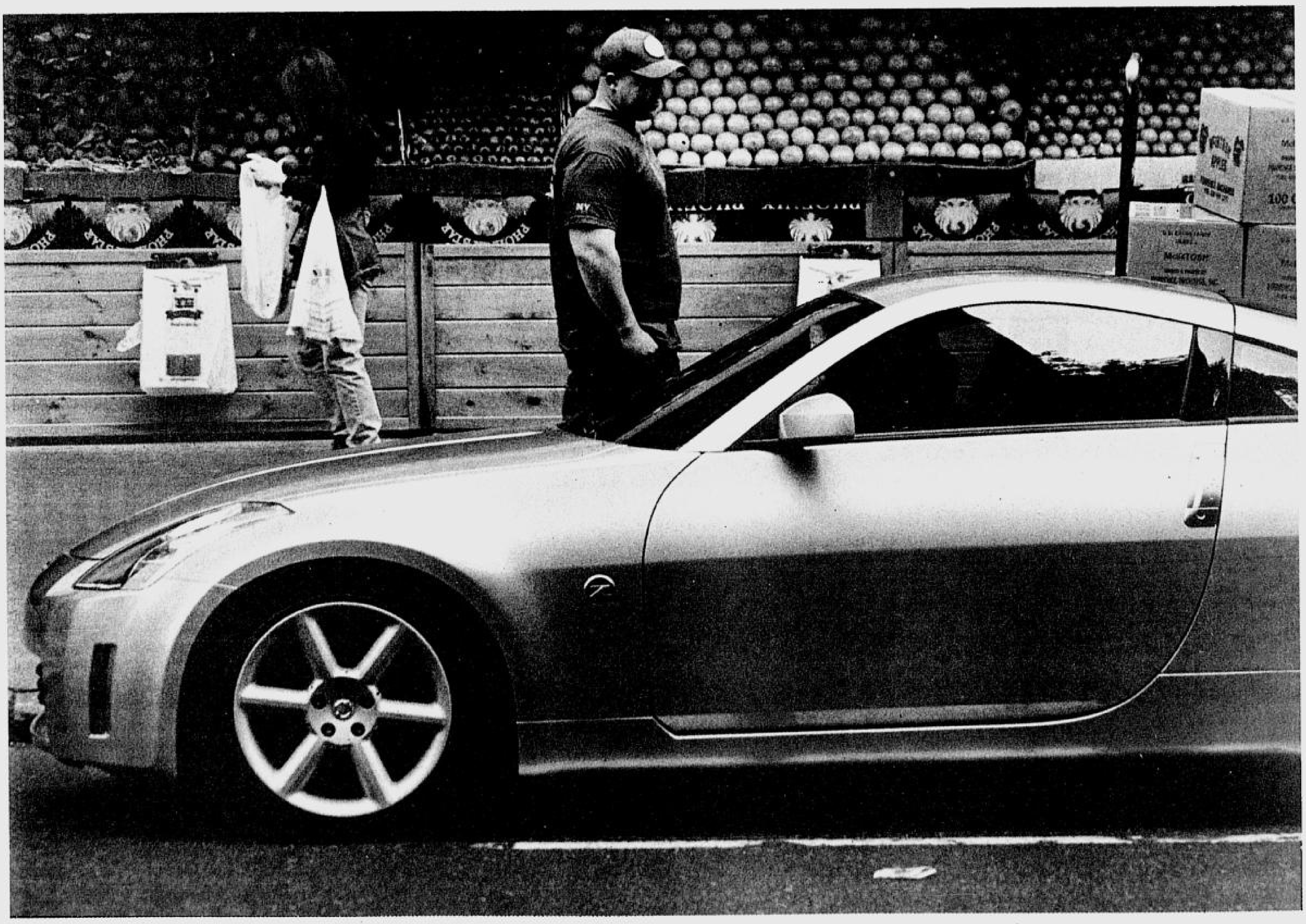
"Other gang members are still out there who could strike anytime," Senga said, adding that continued civilian support is the key to prevent kidnapping and other crimes.

A company of soldiers, backed by armored personnel carriers, swooped down on a house in Sitio Sukon, Barangay Poblacion, SK Pendatun town in Maguindanao at 11:30 a.m.

Mamalimping did not resist arrest but his companion, Tautu Guiaman, managed to escape.

Seized from Mamalimping were two M-16 Armalite rifles, 300 rounds of ammunition, a communications set and a sachet of shabu. He is now undergoing interrogation at the Army's 301st Infantry Brigade in Tacurong City.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
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'Duman' fest honors women farmers

By Tonette Orejas
Sta. Rita, Pampanga

ON SATURDAY night, the few *asung* (wooden mortars), *alung* (wooden pestles) and every tool there is for making the *duman*, the traditional rice cereal of Kapampangans, were out in Barangays Santa Monica and San Agustin in Sta. Rita, Pampanga.

Assembling around the age-old implements arranged at the *sulip* (space under the nipa hut) of the Cuenco family, the men pounded the cooked and air-dried pale *lakatan malutu* (glutinous rice).

Almost an hour later, the women tossed their *igu* (bamboo sieve), separating the chaff from the grain.

As the pounding and the sieving intensified, the initial yield of green, flattened rice called the *duman* lets out a sweet fragrance. It blended with the cool *amihan* (northeast monsoon) wind that freshened up the crowd that gathered that night for the town's Duman Festival.

Simultaneously happening at the Cuenco home and on a makeshift stage near the toiling of the *duman* makers, the merrymaking and poetry reading by 60 local artists were dedicated to women farmers who began what is now a dying tradition.

Tribute

The festival paid tribute to the late Simprosa de Castro and other women in the two Sta. Rita villages who began and passed down the tradition of *duman*-making that is unique to the town.

Only six families have kept on with the practice, according to Oswaldo Cuenco, 77, the great-grandson of De Castro. Aside from the Cuencos, two families of the Valencia clan and two families of the Galang and Salvador clans continue to make the *duman* until now, he said.

The homegrown cultural troupe Arti Sta. Rita, led by choreographer Andy Alviz of the Broadway play Miss Saigon, dedicated the revival of the old Kapampangan song "O Ima (Oh Mother)" to De Castro and the women *duman*-makers of her generation. De Castro died in 1865.

The song is one of the 11 traditional and four contemporary Kapampangan songs featured in a compact disc that will be launched on Dec. 22, the album's co-producer, the Holy Angel University's Center of Kapampangan Studies, announced.

'Saup-Saup'

In De Castro's time, as Arti Sta. Rita's research showed, the *duman* was not made for commercial reasons.

"It was a delicious food served solely on the clan's dining table," the group, in the festival's program, said. "When members of the family wanted to eat the *duman*, they helped make it. In the collective work that is *pamakipagduman*, the values of helping (*mapanyaup*) and concern for others (*mapagmasabal*) deepened among Sta. Rita folk."

The mothers supervised the process that followed after the men in the clan harvested the rice stalks, usually on the 10th day of November. Because of the multi-step, repetitive processes, the *duman* was also like a child being nurtured into an upright person, the group said.

"Like Apung Simprosa (De Castro) and other mothers who started the *duman* tradition, they manifested their genuine love that fostered the tradition which we are all proud of," it said.

Duman-making, as a clan-based culinary art, spread to the nearby towns of Bacolor, Guagua, Lubao, Porac and Floridablanca. By the turn of the 20th century, it became a favorite in the popular local trade of Kapampangan delicacies.

Still, the *duman* from Sta. Rita reigned, Cuenco said. *Duman*-making, he said, was also why the rice variety *lakatan malutu* (*malagkit* to Tagalogs) has survived pestilence, earthquakes, floods, wars, volcanic eruptions and other disasters.

The rice variety is planted beginning June, Cuenco said. Fertilizers and pesticides are never used. Its source is unknown but sometimes traced to Chinese traders in the town of Guagua (Wawa) in the early 1800s, he said.

A good part of the harvest is stored to protect and sustain the vanishing variety found only in Sta. Rita, Cuenco said. "No other grain would do. It's not the *duman* unless the same variety is used," he said.

The grain used to be grown in the neighboring town of Porac and Floridablanca until the 1991 eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo, he said.

The Cuencos cultivate the variety in a borrowed parcel of land and like other *duman*-making families, get a limited supply of the grain from some farmers in the villages.

Legacy

Cuenco's wife Julia, 72, learned *duman*-making from her grandmother Maria Cunanan, also an apprentice of De Castro.

The *duman* that the Cuencos prepared on Saturday night were not, like in the past, bound for the marketplace. They were made on a per-order basis.

Julia packed them in aluminum foil, measuring the supply in her grandmother's wooden narra boxes of *salop* (six liters) and ganta (three liters). The narra boxes still have the *tingga* (scraps of used bullets) that the Spanish colonial government issued to registered vendors.

The Cuencos sold each *salop* at only P1,500 or P600 cheaper than the ordinary price on festival night. The laborers, according to Julia, were happy that night. Like in olden times, at least 50 percent of the sales were shared with them.

AS JULIA Cuenco has strictly adhered to the old way of preparing the "duman," she has also stuck to the old way of measuring the quantity of the delicacy by using the "salop" and the ganta. Note the "tingga" on her ganta that her grandmother had passed down to her. TONETTE OREJAS

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FROM THE STAFF AND MANAGEMENT OF MABINI MEDICAL CLINIC,INC

Artist Santi Bose's home in Sagada's morning mist

By Desiree Caluza
Sagada, Mt. Province

BEFORE Santiago Bose passed away exactly a year ago today, he cracked macabre jokes on his last interview for a documentary film on the late artist Roberto Villanueva.

Bose recalled carrying Villanueva's ashes on his way to Sagada, Mt. Province.

"I was riding in the bus when I spilled some of Robert's ashes and they were flying like wild in the air. And then, I just said: 'Oh, I'm so sorry, Robert, you will be a conductor in your next life,'" Bose said, laughing like the Buddha.

So when Bose's family and friends went to Sagada last year to place his ashes in the hills he loved and cherished, everyone made sure that they were kept in a sealed urn provided by Sagada-based potter Jaime de Guzman.

SAGADA elders perform a ritual to ask the spirits to guide Bose on his journey to the spirit world. TOMMY HAFALLA

Sagada has maintained its reputation as a Shangri-la, with its morning mist, thick pine forests, legendary caves and spiritual energy that keeps one at peace.

This is probably one of the reasons Bose chose Sagada as his final resting place, aside from the fact that he wanted to join his artist friends, like Villanueva and Pepito Bosch, at Echo Valley.

I know that Sagada is a beautiful place. It is a refuge of artists.

"If you would like to know the reasons your friends frequent Sagada, you should ask them while they are still alive," said a chuckling Mayor Tom Killip, Bose's long-time friend.

But for Killip, Sagada has a magnetic attraction. "For an artist, you look for an atmosphere that is essential and beautiful in ways more than one, so you keep coming back because this is where you become productive. That's how I gather it from artists," he said.

"In the case of Pepito, Robert and Santi, I suppose they were drawn to the same motives. If they love beauty and they do something to express it, and for me, that's a very high level of being human," he added.

Bose had a special heart for Sagada. He worked on a mural at the facade of St. Mary's School in 1983, through the initiative of his friend Boy Yuchengco.

A pioneer in indigenous and post-colonial art, Bose had endeared himself to the Sagada community while doing the mural.

The mural depicts the Sagada community—images of a woman farmer, the rice terraces, the Sagada Community Multi-Purpose Cooperative, men in g-string, a Dangwa bus and the *bulol* (rice god) at the center.

Killip said Bose, in one of his visits before he died, was aware that the mural was fading, but his hopes to restore it did not tarnish.

Restoration

Since Sagada has produced many artists, talks are on the way for the mural's restoration, together with the Fish Eye Art Project, a Baguio-based artist collective that Bose co-founded in June last year.

Bose was a regular visitor to Sagada. He would visit with artist friends, like Boy Yniguez and Alfred "Krip" Yuson to interact with the community through his art. His works about Sagada would often appear in the defunct Ermita magazine in the 1970s, where he was an illustrator.

Dramatist Karlo Altomonte said plans were under way to revive Ermita in honor of Bose. Altomonte said the magazine would be edited by Yuson. Lilledeshan, Bose's daughter who is now based in California, is busy updating her father's website.

On Dec. 30, 2002, before Bose's ashes were taken to Echo Valley, two elders performed a *pada-angan*, a ritual that involved the slaughtering of a chicken to ask the spirits to make peace with their loved ones.

The ritual was attended by Santi's wife Peggy, his children Lilledeshan, Mutya and Lawin. Fish Eye artists Altomonte and RL Abella, and his friends Australian artist Pat Hoffie, writer Angel Shaw, activist Joan Carling, photographer Tommy Hafalla and Killip, and several residents joined the ceremony.

The elders chanted that the spirits secure Bose's loved ones on their way home and that they would have good health.

After the ritual, the group went to the steep hills of Echo Valley to bury Bose's ashes. The urn, which contained the ashes, were tied to a rope with red incense and raised to the hill. The urn was finally placed in the rocks just near Bosch's and Villanueva's resting places.

(To commemorate Santi Bose's first death anniversary, a Fish Eye Festival of Arts will be held on Dec. 3-10 at the Earth Cafe on Gov. Pack Road in Baguio City. For details, please call 0919-5951497 or 0920-5364072)

HYBRID TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Hybrid carabaos graze at the grounds of the Central Luzon State University in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. The CLSU is leading the way in developing stronger, disease-resistant carabaos for farm work and food.

7 Calabarzon policemen dismissed for drug use

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—As President Macapagal-Arroyo called for a heightened campaign against lawmen involved in drug syndicates, the Calabarzon police office yesterday ordered the dismissal of seven of its personnel, including a policewoman and three rookie cops, who were found positive of using illegal drugs.

Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jaime Caringal said the dismissed police personnel failed the drug test they conducted on all police personnel in the region a few months back.

He said Calabarzon police crime laboratory personnel found traces of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in the urine samples of SPO1 Jaime Cuaycong, PO2 Edgardo Carandang and PO1 Feliciano Gonzales Jr. of the Laguna police office; PO3 Rebecca Bautista of Cavite police; PO1 Rico Gutierrez, PO1 Alex Lagmay and PO2 Mark Anthony Bugayong of Batangas police.

Two other lawmen, SPO1 Gandioso Reyes and PO3 McArthur Quijano of Cavite, filed a motion to review their cases.

Caringal said the drug tests on the policemen followed strict rules that have been approved by the Philippine National Police.

He said they had also given enough chance for the discharged PNP members to prove their innocence but still they failed to pass the tests.

The move to fire the policemen was meant to show the law enforcers and the public that the PNP is firm in its decision to rid the police force of scalawags, he said.

"We want to show the public that we are dead serious (in cleaning) our ranks of police scalawags and erring personnel of the PNP. We cannot let these rotten tomatoes ruin the image of the police organization," Caringal said.

He said the PNP has also started implementing regular exercise and sports programs to help their personnel maintain physical fitness so that they could fight crime groups more effectively and keep them away from drug abuse.

Caringal added that he has ordered all police stations in the region to coordinate with barangay officials on personalities suspected to be involved in the illegal drugs trade.

He said the Barangay Anti-Drug Action Council has been helping the police track down supposed hideouts of drug peddlers.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo started the government's all-out war against drug syndicates, the Calabarzon police has busted at least four huge manufacturers of shabu and arrested several Chinese nationals suspected of financing the drug laboratories.

The regional police command has also apprehended thousands of street pushers and users who victimized young students and out-of-school youth.

Some of its personnel have also died during antidrug operations this year.

MILF says bid to link rebs to JI old hat

DAVAO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) dismissed as "recycled issue" the government's allegation that the rebel group is harboring members of the regional terror group Jemaah Islamiyah.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that there was nothing new in government's allegations.

"This is just a diversionary tactic of the government, to recondition the mind of the people because of what is happening (elections) in Manila," Kabalu said.

Kabalu said the MILF had already offered itself for an investigation because "their accusation is very general."

The MILF also believes that the new allegations are meant to "drum up (support) for a higher budget" for the military from Congress, Kabalu added.

It could also be, Kabalu added, that the government wants to convince the international community, particularly the United States, that it needs more financial assistance. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Vessel licenses

LUCENA CITY—The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources is studying the possibility of adopting a nationwide moratorium next year on the issuance of licenses for the operation of commercial fishing vessels. The BFAR seeks to stop the continued depletion of marine resources due to rampant commercial fishing in Philippine seas. Rosa Macas, BFAR director for Southern Tagalog, said that even without complete data to support their claim that Philippine seas are over-fished, the deplorable situation of traditional fishing grounds can speak for themselves.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Reds' holiday truce

LUCENA CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines and its military wing, the New People's Army, would only call for a Christmas ceasefire if there was substantial progress on back channel talks in Oslo, Norway toward the formal resumption of peace talks, communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said. If there are some positive indications that the Macapagal administration is sincere in its intention to resume formal peace negotiation, the revolutionary forces can declare the truce as a confidence-building gesture, Rosal said.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Batangas ecopark opens

BATANGAS CITY—The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office and the Shell Pilipinas Exploration (Spex) formally opened to the public the province's first-ever provincial mini-forest and ecology center, inside this city's Laurel Park. "This park will be the legacy we will leave for the people of the next generation. This is for the people to take care of," said Jeremy McIiff, Spex managing director. Two years in the making, the ecopark has a mini-forest, ecology center, nursery and amphitheater.

Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Anilao diver's fee

MABINI, Batangas—Diving in Anilao's dive sites does not come for free. With the launching of the divers' conservation fee, a diver can enjoy Anilao's famous dive sites only after paying P50 for a day. World Wildlife Fund, in cooperation with the local government, divers and non-government organizations such as Bantay Dagat and the Friends of Balayan Bay launched the conservation fee for divers recently at the Eagle Point Resort in Barangay Bagalangit here. The first of its kind in the country, the conservation fee for divers was launched in the presence of divers, local community representatives, US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis Ricciardone, Energy Secretary Vince Perez, Gov. Hermilando Mandanas and invited journalists.

Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Child deaths down

DUMAGUETE CITY—Infant and child mortality rate in Negros Oriental has decreased over the last seven years and this was credited to the provincial government's foreign-funded child-friendly and maternal care program. Gov. George Arnaiz said infant mortality rate in the province dropped from 12 for every 1,000 live births in 1995 to 8 in 2002. He said the mortality rate of children below five years old also decreased from 21 for every 1,000 in 1995 to 13 in 2002. The maternal death rate also went down from 83 for every 1,000 mothers in 1995 to 69 in 2002. Arnaiz said the decrease was attributed to the support and commitment of local officials to the Fifth Country Program for Children (CPC-V) funded by the United Nations Children's Fund. Negros Oriental is one of the pilot provinces of the CPC-V, which is designed to promote children's welfare and development.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

New eagle named after Gloria

DAVAO CITY—After bridges, roads, infrastructures or a foundation that was named after her, a 10-month-old hatchling of the endangered Philippine Eagle was named after President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"In this particular one, we wanted to honor the President, because she has really been supportive of Mindanao," said Carlos Dominquez, treasurer of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) of their decision to name the new hatchling after the President.

A naming contest is usually held by the PEF each time they have a new hatchling in their captivity. Some eaglets were named "Pagasa" (Hope) or "Pagkakaisa" (Unity).

This time, however, PEF made an exception when it opted to choose the name for the particular bird.

Dominguez said "Gloria," the new hatchling, is a very healthy bird and will serve as a symbol for Mindanao.

When asked if even the bird will be given special treatment, Dominguez laughed and said: "Of course, she will get the best food."

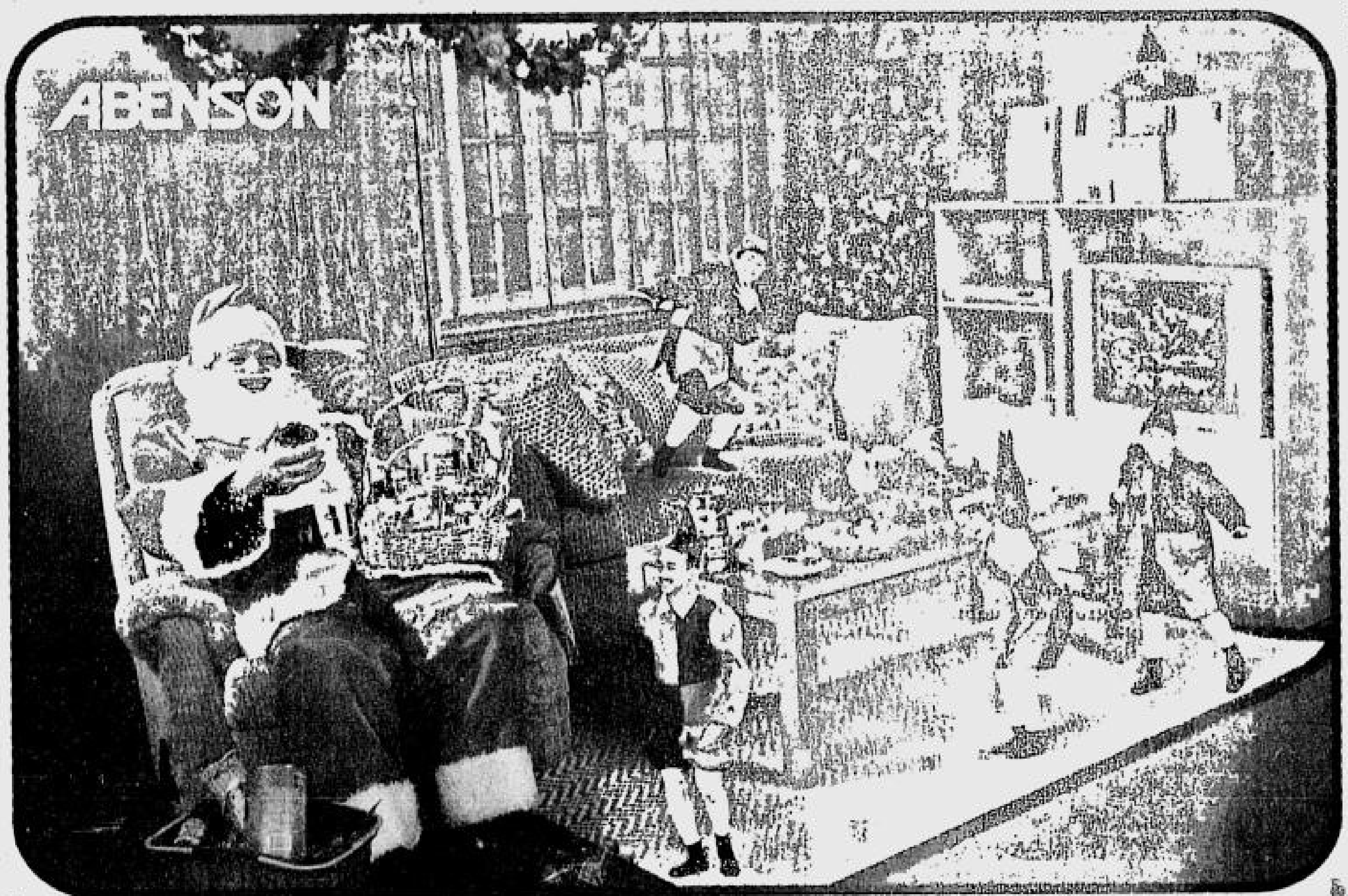
Dominguez said PEF was able to release four eagles in the wild. The eagles were bred under their captivity and care.

Gloria, he said, will follow suit when she reaches maturity age.

He said that they placed a special radio transmitter to the freed eagles to monitor their survival in the wild.

The Philippine Eagle has been considered an endangered species and faces risks of extinction if left for granted.

Habitat loss was cited as the main reason the Philippine Eagle's population was dwindling and its existence being threatened. *Dennis Jay Santos and Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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METROBRIEFS

Trader dies in robbery

ANTONIO Uy, the man who was shot by two robbers on Monday, died while undergoing treatment in Mandaluyong City that same night. Uy, owner of a printing press in Barangay Plainview, this city, died at the Dr. Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center, according to a hospital staff member. Uy and his driver, Enrico Lustre, on Monday afternoon were on board a Honda CRV and were driving through Libertad Street when two men on a motorcycle blocked their path and shot them. Uy had just withdrawn P50,000 from a Metrobank branch in the area, said Senior Supt. Ericson Velasquez, city police chief. The robbers failed to get the money. *Luige del Puerto*

No water in Pasig, Taguig

THERE will be a water service interruption in parts of Pasig City, Taguig and Pateros which will start at 10 p.m. today up to 6 a.m. on Thursday, according to Manila Water officials. The 8-hour service interruption will give way to the interconnection of pipelines along A. Luna Street in Pasig City. Affected areas are Barangay Malinao, Bambang, Sta. Rosa, San Jose, Kapasigan, Sumilang and Taguig and Pateros. For details, affected residents may call Manila Water hotline 1627.

4 guilty men freed

FOUR men who have been accused of robbery would soon be out of jail after they were found guilty of the crime. Judge William Simon Peralta of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 50 is set to order the release of Rodelio Sibug, Roberto Francisco, Mario Meguillas and Jonjon Samonte. Each of the men had already spent more than a year in detention. The men were found guilty of robbery, and were sentenced to a prison term of six months to a year. Peralta said that the men had more than made up for their crimes with the time they had already spent in jail. *Tarra Quismundo*

Barangay leaders speak out

THE STORY on a barangay councilman who started a free school in Marikina City apparently did not sit well with leaders of Barangay Concepcion Dos in Marikina City. In a letter, the barangay council took exception to the article, "3 free schools for Marikina poor," which was published last Sunday. Barangay Secretary Exequiel Alikpala said Kagawad Norman Subido should have been addressed as a "councilman," not "councilor," as it appeared in the story's accompanying caption. Alikpala also clarified that Subido does not head any barangay committee, and that the community has nothing to do with Subido's daycare center. Solicitations by the councilman is not sanctioned by the barangay. Donations do not go to the barangay's purse, Alikpala stressed. *Luige del Puerto*

Red Cross confab

THE PHILIPPINE National Red Cross will hold its 25th biennial convention on Dec. 9 to 11 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel. PNRC Chairman Jaime Canatoy said the theme of the three-day confab is "Red Cross: Working Together for Unity." At the heart of the convention is Strategy 2010, crafted by the Geneva-based International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for worldwide implementation by its 181 strong National Societies, one of which is the PNRC.

FIREARMS FOR FIREFIGHTERS

NPD chief douses firemen's plea

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

ANOTHER top fire official has come out in support of the idea of arming firefighters in northern Metro Manila.

But Northern Police District Director Marcelino Franco yesterday told the INQUIRER that he saw "no need" to arm firefighters.

"They could always coordinate with the police for security," Franco said.

Franco said that the answer to the firemen's security worries lies in proper education.

He said firefighters should take the time to explain to residents the procedures to follow during fire alarms.

The chief of the Valenzuela City Fire Department yesterday said that he is supporting the proposal of his counterpart in Caloocan City, Agapito Nacario, to form a unit of armed firefighters.

Valenzuela City Fire chief Efren Yadao yesterday told the INQUIRER that his men see the need to protect themselves during fire-fighting operations.

The solution, he said, is to arm the firemen.

And should the proposal be approved, Yadao said that they would implement a strict process to select the men who would be given arms.

Nacario has already written the Department of Interior and Local Government, as well as his superiors in the Bureau of Fire Protection, pushing for an Organized Intervention Unit among local fire stations.

Under his proposal, the unit of armed firemen would assist other firefighters, including volunteers, during operations. The unit would also secure fire trucks and equipment.

Yadao also did not agree with Franco when the NPD chief said that it would be best for firemen to cooperate with the police.

IN THIS file photo, a group of volunteer firemen show off their firefighting skills during an exercise. The mauling of four firemen, including two volunteers, during an operation in Caloocan City has led fire officials to propose that an armed unit guard firefighters during fire-fighting operations.

Yadao said that while they usually have police escorts during fire operations, policemen could not accompany the firemen in small alleys near the fire because the lawmen, unlike firefighters, do not have protection suits.

Yadao said it is usually in the alleys where firefighters get into trouble, especially with drunk and unruly residents.

He said sometimes residents do not understand the work of firefighters.

Nacario came up with the proposal days after four firefighters were mauled during a fire which razed a slum community in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan City, on Nov. 19.

Two of the firefighters were members of the Chinese-Filipino volunteer fire brigade.

The residents scrambled for the water hoses because wanted their houses to be hosed with water first. When the firemen resisted, the residents ganged up on them. A volunteer fireman was stabbed in the hand.

Several fire trucks also lost nozzles and other equipment worth thousands of pesos.

Several fire trucks also lost nozzles and other equipment worth thousands of pesos.

Former House official gets 2 life terms for '01 killings

By Tina Santos

JUDGE Ma. Theresa Yadao of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court yesterday sentenced a former security supervisor of the House of Representatives to two life terms for shooting to death the security director of Congress and the firearms custodian two years ago.

Yadao, of QCRTC Branch 81, found Renato dela Cruz guilty and ordered him to pay the victims' heirs a total of P425,000 in damages.

Gerald Rallos, the firearms custodian, was inside the office of the Presidential Security Group-Legislative Security Bureau (PSG-LSB) of the House of Representatives in Batasan Hills, Quezon City, when Dela Cruz arrived on the afternoon of Jan. 5, 2001.

Court records showed that the two men figured in a heated argument over the sudden change in the schedule of their duties during the holiday season.

Prosecution witness Ma. Lourdes Tubal told the court she left the room with Rallos' daughter, Faye, because Dela Cruz had already drawn his service firearm.

Tubal reported the fight to Ruselo Ylagan, the executive director of the PSG-LSB, who immediately proceeded to Rallos' room.

Moments later, Tubal said, she heard successive gun shots emerging from Rallo's office.

In his defense, Dela Cruz told the court that he was only defending himself from attack.

But according to Yadao, who is also the judge in the controversial Kuratong Baleleng case, the evidence and testimony of witnesses did not support Dela Cruz's defense.

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Canon

Shabu ingredients found in mail

By Tarra Quismundo

AUTHORITIES stumbled on two packages containing 95 kilos of a substance used in the manufacture of shabu.

Romeo Montes, director of the Foreign Surface Mail Distribution Center of the Philippine Postal Corporation said the packages, which originated from Pakistan, contained tablets of ephedrine sulfate, placed in bottles the size of vitamin containers, in separate packages flown in last week.

He said the tablets were found after the packages—along with three others airlifted from Pakistan—passed through the x-ray machine at the Central Mail Exchange Center in Pasay City, where packages sent through air mail are brought.

The packages were brought to the FSMDC office in Port Area, Manila, after officials suspected that the packages contained illegal substances.

EMPLOYEES of the Bureau of Customs count bottles of ephedrine which were mailed from Karachi, Pakistan, in an attempt to smuggle into the country the drugs used in making shabu.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Two in fake NBI clearances fall

AGENTS of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested two men in the University Belt in Manila on Monday for allegedly manufacturing fake NBI clearances.

The suspects now in custody are Jovanni Pagaduan, 32, and Mencio Cawaling, 55, both employed at Dayrit's Foto Graphics and General Merchandise at 1871 Claro M. Recto Avenue, Quiapo.

The two were arrested in an entrapment set up by the NBI.

The shop's owner, Elenita Dayrit, 43, of St. Vincent Street, Paradise Village, Project 8, Quezon City, is at large.

In a report by the NBI International Police Division, Dayrit had allegedly offered clients a bogus clearance in exchange for P3,000.

The application fee for an NBI clearance only costs P115.

On Monday, an informant posed as a client accompanied by two NBI agents.

According to the agents, Pagaduan and Cawaling processed the fake clearance using a personal computer.

The two face charges of falsification of public documents *Tarra Quismundo*

BF draws ire of mayors

From page A24

hopeful the court will rule against the Parañaque City government and send a message to other local government units "to hold the roads and streets sacred."

Fernando reiterated that the roads are for vehicles and motorists, not illegal vendors.

He admitted that since the MMDA has locked horns with the Manila City government on road-clearing operations, the agency has prioritized the major roads, especially Edsa.

"Ever since they (Manila City government) prevented us from clearing their streets of illegal vendors, we decided to focus on major arteries which affect the whole metropolis," Fernando said.

But he stressed that the permanent or temporary closure of national roads like Rizal Avenue and Baclaran could have "repercussions too great for the nation."

"The court decision, once it rules in favor of the MMDA, would certainly warn city officials not to close their roadways to the public," he said.

MANILA'S NORTH CEMETERY

The living give way to the dead

By Tarra Quismundo

THEY sleep at night to the sound of dogs barking and wailing nearby. Add to that the smell of trash and the stench emanating from shallow graves of dogs put to sleep.

And left with only wild grass as their bed, residents of the remaining open space inside the Manila North Cemetery could only hope to find a new place to call home.

Sixty-two families, many of whom had lived inside the public cemetery for 20 years, had to leave their homes after the Manila City Hall decided to turn their community into a graveyard.

City Hall is putting up 40,000 more niches for the dead with Mayor Joselito Atienza's latest venture, this time with private developer CHC Consortium.

"We are willing to leave if they could give us a place to go to," said 69-year-old Adelaida Bravo.

Bravo had been living in the cemetery since 1982.

Her eight children, who now have their own families, grew up in the area.

Bravo's husband, who was a contractual employee of the Parks Development Office in the North Cemetery for 21 years, passed away in 2001.

In the last week of November, she and her neighbors dismantled their houses on orders of the Parks Development Office.

They were told to occupy a space beside the dog pound and burial ground, a few meters away from the PDO office building near the cemetery's entrance.

"We had no choice. We dismantled our homes ourselves, because if we had waited for a demolition team, the materials of our houses could have been destroyed," Bravo said in Filipino.

The residents said the PDO administration allowed only the PDO employees to stay longer in their makeshift shanties inside the cemetery.

But the outsiders, including Bravo and the relatives of former PDO employees, have been asked to leave as soon as possible.

They, however, simply have nowhere to go.

Atienza said in a phone interview that his order was to transfer the residents so that the 2.5 hectares that were up for the redevelopment project would be vacated.

"The cemetery is not a residential area. I will also try my best to help those who are truly deserving to be relocated, including the long-time employees of the cemetery," Atienza said, adding that "We don't want to drive them out into the streets."

He added that the dog pound, beside which the residents were asked to transfer, was clean.

On the other hand, the residents complained of the smell of the dogs and of garbage.

Atienza said that seven hectares of the 54-hectare cemetery, the country's biggest, was the only remaining space for Manila's departed ones.

He said that "very high standard and world-class materials" would be used to build the niches on 2.5 hectares of the free lot.

Atienza said that 15,000 of the more than 40,000 niches to be built could be availed of by Manila residents who would not be able to afford niches in private memorial parks.

The rest would be sold to whoever could afford a burial plot in the city.

The total cost of the construction will be shouldered by the private developer, which will also be paying a rental fee for the city-owned lot.

"There are no more burial space for Manileños," said Atienza.

But for Bravo, City Hall seems to care more for the dead than for the underprivileged living.

"We, who are still alive are being killed," Bravo said.

HIS PARENTS are hoping for kind hearts to help extend Jerwin's life.

An early struggle for Jerwin

JERWIN Certeza, only four months old, is already fighting for his life.

When he was barely a month old, he underwent an Ileostomy procedure; where his large intestines were placed outside the abdominal wall, due to the enlargement of his abdomen.

Doctors at the National Children's Hospital also diagnosed him with sepsis, disseminated intravascular coagulation, wound dehiscense and Hepatitis A.

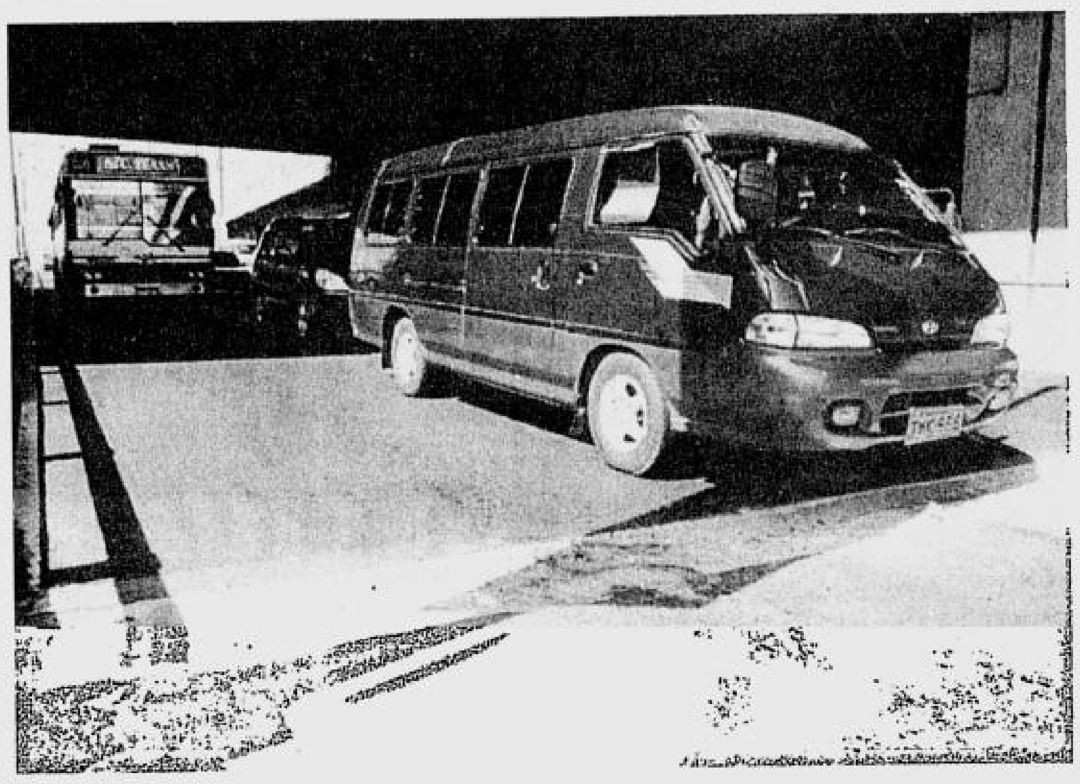
Dr. Elerose Martinez said he still needed another operation to close the Ileostomy performed on him.

His father, a contractual worker in Laguna, and his mother, a housewife, have no means of providing for his medical needs.

Now they are appealing to kind-hearted individuals and companies for financial assistance to save their son's life.

Donations can be deposited to the account of Rolando Garcia (Metro Bank Account No. 263305170268), or delivered to the Certeza's residence at Sapang Talin Island, Binangonan Rizal.

Donors may also contact Fr. Raymond Bodson at 724-5402 to 03.



FLYOVER TRAP
A van slows down to avoid falling in and getting jarred by the deep, long excavation (white portion on road) which runs across the southbound lane of the Edsa-Quezon Avenue flyover in Quezon City. Vehicular accidents had been reported to the police due to drivers making sudden stops at the excavation site in the flyover.
JOAN BONDOC

Help us find Maricris

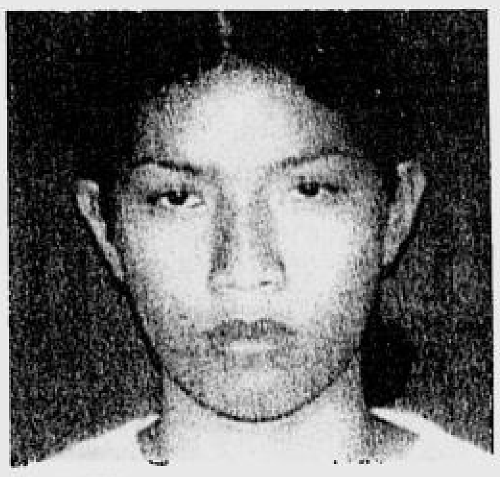
SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Maricris Payumo of 2696 Ma. Aurora St., Poblacion, Makati, is missing.

She was last seen on Nov. 9, 2003, wearing an orange shirt, checkered brown pants and black rubber shoes.

Her mother told the INQUIRER that the senior student of the Makati High School in Barangay Poblacion left home to buy materials for her school project.

She never came back. Efforts to look for Maricris with friends and relatives have failed.

Those who might know her whereabouts can contact Mr. Pedrito Payumo at 899-55-75 or Mrs. Marian Payumo at 899-50-14.



MARICRIS

5-year-old's life is one of tubes and needles

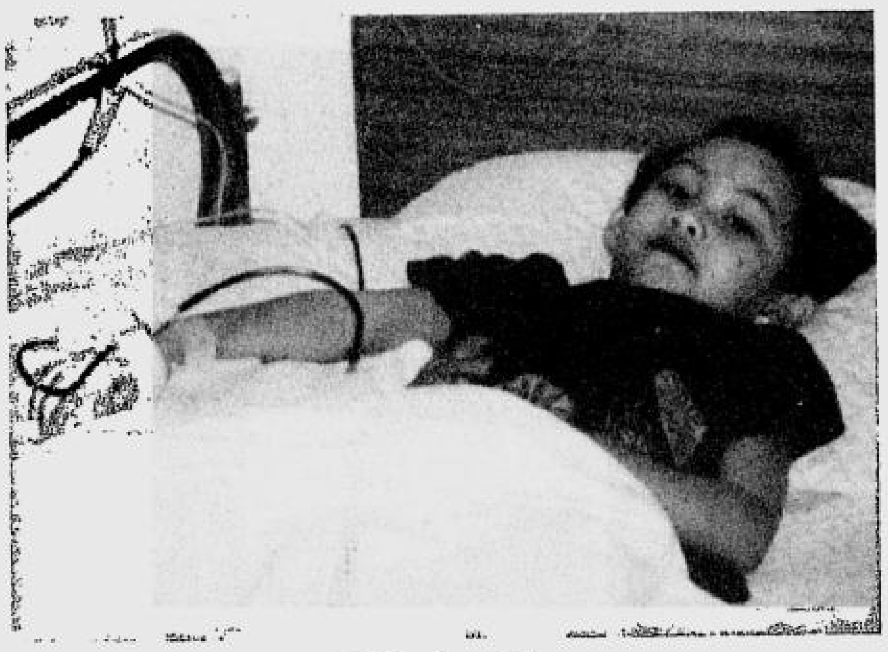
By Anne A. Jambora

A DISTRAUGHT boy wailed in a corner of a hospital room fearing the needle that will prick his skin to get a sample of his blood. His mother, seated next to him, made several futile attempts to pacify the kid.

A few feet away, a skinny little girl, about half the boy's size, calmly watched the drama between mother and son. She was also going to undergo the same procedure. Meeting her gaze, the boy seemed to be filled with shame and whispered to his mother: "*Iiyak din yan*, mama."

The children's eyes were still locked when a doctor took the frail girl's arm, searched for a vein, inserted the needle and drew blood. To his surprise, there was not a twitch nor a whimper from the tiny girl. She stared at the doctor's flustered face for a moment, seemingly bored, then broke into a big, toothsome smile.

Patricia "Tricia" Andrea Francisco, now 5, is no stranger to injections. Stricken with a genetic rare blood disorder called Beta Thalassemia Major with Hemoglobin E, a severe kind of anemia, she has been jabbed with needles since birth for the blood transfusion she needs every two to three months. The blood that flows through her veins, in fact, is not hers—was never hers. So far, Tricia has had 19 red blood cells transfusions, the most recent on Oct. 26.



TRICIA during one of her periodic blood transfusions

Picture perfect

To a casual observer, Tricia looks like a healthy, happy child. Teachers of the above-average student at the Divine Light Academy in Las Piñas City, tells her parents that the girl has a strong personality that even big boys could not bully her around. Active, smart and courageous, she has never let her illness stand in her way. Occasionally, just like any child, she will try to get out of doing chores by saying she is sick, Tricia's mother Emalyn notes with fondness. "*May sakit ako, eh!*" Tricia would say. (She recently got the Best in Conduct award in school, though.)

But when her red blood cells start to fail to function normally again, Tricia would grow quiet and pale. Bruises begin to appear on her body and her breathing becomes labored characterized by an abnormality in the hemoglobin preventing the red blood cells from functioning normally. In its milder form, thalassemia patients may not require blood transfusions, except perhaps occasionally when they suffer an infection or are under severe stress.

Tricia, who has the more severe form, will need transfusion all her life. But while the transfusions are helping her lead as normal a life as possible, long-term treatment has disadvantages. The treatment can lead to a steady rise in her organs' iron deposits resulting in iron intoxication and sudden death.

Soaring iron

Since Tricia's bone marrow has difficulty producing healthy red blood cells, it is now overworked. This can result in deformities to her prominent bones, especially those in the face. Thus, the girl's doctors are not only closely monitoring her liver profile but also regularly measuring her growth. At present, her spleen is already protruding from her lower chest, and may soon require surgery.

Tricia's iron deposits will continue to soar as long as she undergoes blood transfusion. She also runs the risk of contracting diseases from blood donors.

"*Nagsawa na ako sa kakasalin ng dugo*," she told her mother one day. Who wouldn't? When transfusion is needed, she has to stay in the hospital for three days and two nights, with the procedure being done at eight-hour intervals.

The parents know the procedure is prolonging their daughter's life but they are also painfully aware the little girl can only take so much.

Over the years, Emalyn has been doing research on the Internet on her daughter's ailment. She has learned that bone marrow transplantation (BMT) or peripheral blood stem cell transplantation can put an end to blood transfusion, but her family cannot afford the medical procedure. Emalyn works as a human resource development assistant at Philippine Coconut Producers Federation, Inc. (Cocofed), while husband Manuel is an ordinary employee of the Land Bank of the Philippines.

When Emalyn read an article in this paper on Dr. Francisco Vicente Lopez, a specialist in blood-related disorders who also specializes in bone marrow transplantation (BMT) at the Asian Hospital and Medical Center, she quickly sought his help, including raising funds for Tricia's treatment.

Conquering mountains

But Emalyn had also to brace herself for the possibility of not finding a donor for bone marrow matching Tricia's. "Each sibling has a 25 percent chance of matching. If you have a family of 12, hopefully you'll be able to find one there. Sometimes there are seven siblings and none of them would match," Dr. Lopez says.

Peter Julian, Tricia's only sibling who is 12 years her senior, is a perfect match. Dr. Lopez says she has an 86 percent chance for a successful BMT. Peter Julian is a freshman at the University of Santo Tomas taking up Nursing. (Emalyn says her son decided to go into nursing so that, if anything happened to her and her husband, he would be able to care for his sister.)

"I never really lost hope, not even at the start. *May* solution *'yung sakit ni* Tricia," Emalyn says.

Another hurdle

Now Emalyn has another hurdle to overcome. The procedure, from the six-week confinement to medications to outpatient treatments and consultations, costs about P2.5 million. The Franciscos, with the help of Dr. Lopez, were able to raise P32,000 since early this year.

The procedure has to be done soon if it is to succeed. Dr. Lopez says Tricia's iron deposit count must not exceed 1,000 or she will be disqualified. As of February this year, her iron count was already 600. "The BMT procedure is not an emergency, but it's urgent," Dr. Lopez says.

Emalyn has been seeking help for five years now. Her appeals to several US-based foundations were turned down. Her e-mail messages did not get the response she sought. She talked to strangers, to other mothers in doctors' waiting rooms, and just about anybody. One day, sheer desperation drove her to the outskirts of Luzon to attend healing sessions.

This year, things finally began to move a little for the Franciscos. "We asked God for a sign because we didn't have any money for the BMT. The first sign we had was when Tricia found a match in her brother. Then Dr. Lopez came into the picture, who is more than willing to help us," Emalyn says.

Donations can be sent straight to the Asian Hospital and Medical Center Bone Marrow Transplant c/o Patricia Francisco, tel. 771-9213.

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METRO

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

FIGHT OVER STREET VENDORS

BF draws ire of mayors

By Margaux Ortiz

NOW IT'S two mayors against the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair.

Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday stressed that the MMDA should "keep its hands off local government matters."

Marquez, who is now locked in a legal battle with the MMDA for approving a city ordinance allowing local "entrepreneurs" to participate in an agro-industrial fair in Baclaran, said their ordinance is more binding than the MMDA resolution ordering vendors to keep off the streets.

"Ordinances could supersede resolutions," Marquez said. "Fernando, who is a three-time mayor of Marikina, should know that."

Marquez stressed that the MMDA has no legislative powers over the local government units.

"Let's wait for the court to decide on the Baclaran case. Let's see who's right," Marquez said.

Atienza told the INQUIRER he shared Marquez's sentiment.

"We are expected and mandated to plan our own development, including traffic matters," Atienza said.

He added that Marquez and the city council should be given a chance to plan their own development "and should not be dictated by the MMDA."

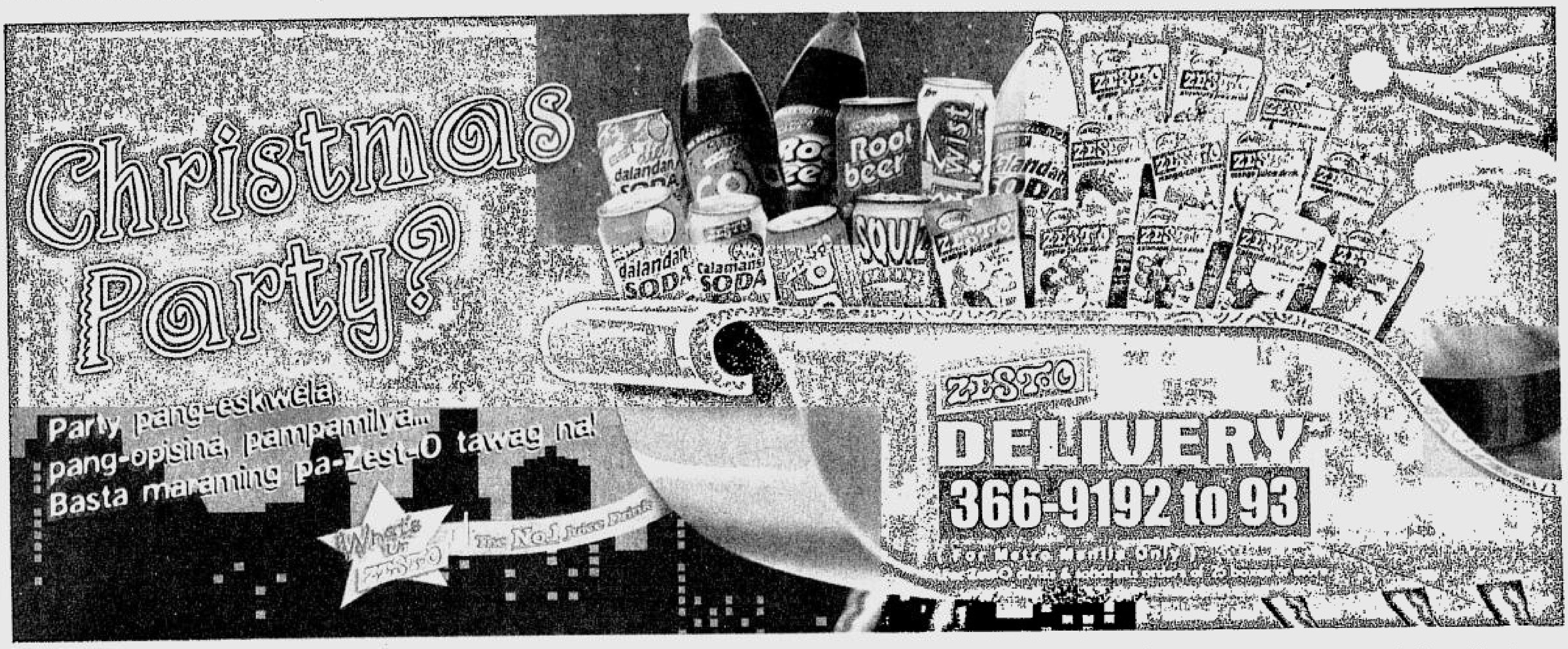
Atienza stressed that the MMDA should learn to respect local authorities and limit themselves to planning and coordination.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, however, countered that he is

BF DRAWS/ A22

HOT VIDEOS
Members of the Presidential Security Group look at some of the P100 million worth of pirated video and audio compact discs seized in a raid in Quiapo, Manila, yesterday. Armed with 336 search warrants, the Videogram Regulatory Board seized countless pirated discs in stalls on the stretch of Elizondo Street in Quiapo. The raid was led by VRB chair Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.

RANDY HORMILLOSA



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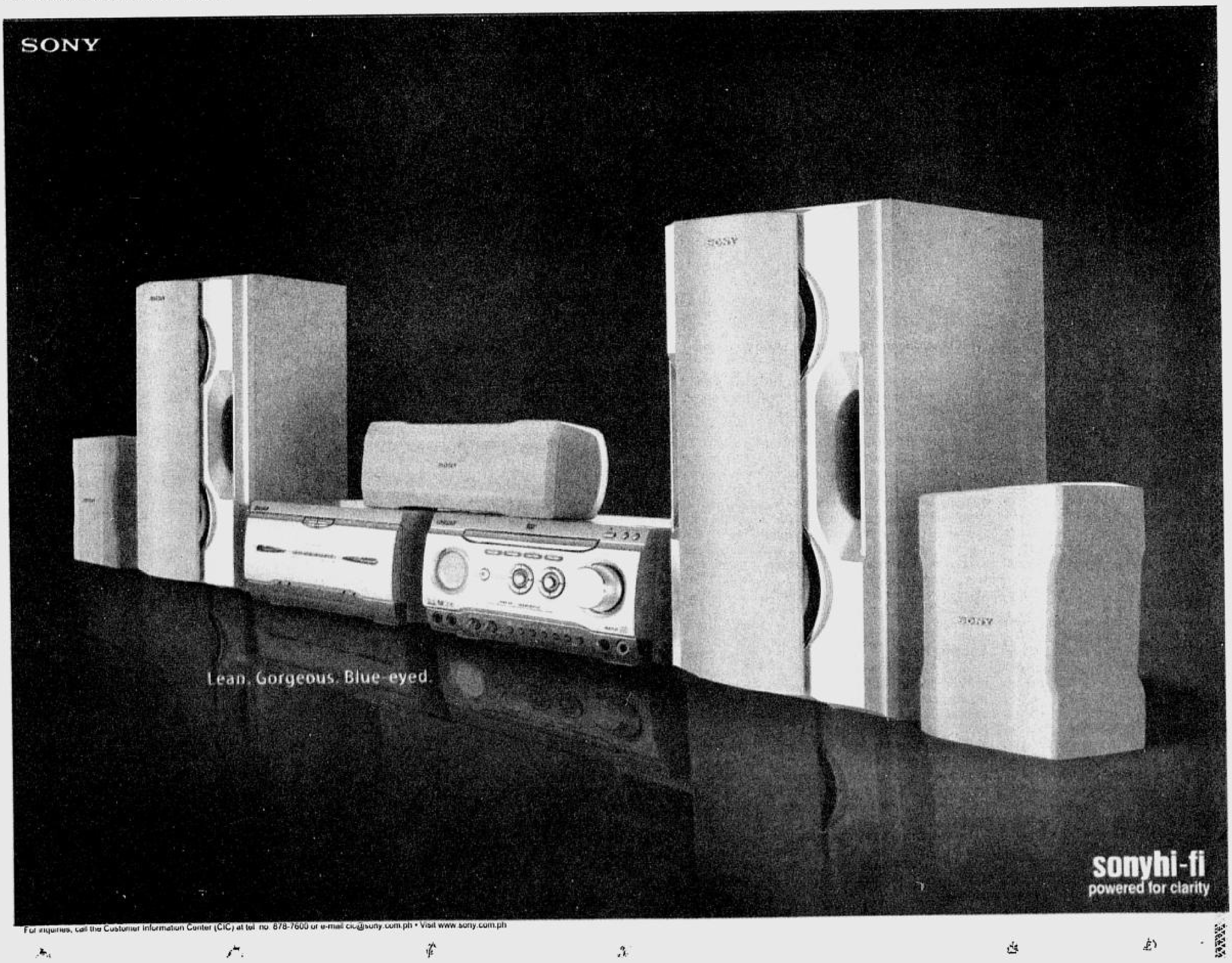

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Old, jolly Bata predicts 5 golds for cue artists

By Roy Luarca

THE BITTERNESS and disappointment brought about by a harrowing defeat two days ago is gone. Efren "Bata" Reyes was his old jolly self when he arrived in Ho Chi Minh City Monday night.

Shrugging off his title loss to fellow former world champion Mika Immonen of Finland in the 1st Cafe Puro Philippine 9-Ball Open Saturday night, Reyes said the RP billiards and snooker team is good for as many as five gold medals in the 22nd Vietnam Southeast Asian Games beginning this week.

"*Basta sa* billiards, *du-dominahin ng Pilipino 'yan. Maaari pa nating masungkit 'yung mga ginto sa* snooker (We're going to dominate billiards. We might even win some snooker golds)," said Reyes.

"*Sa* 9-ball *lang, tiyak halos kami na ni* Francisco "Django" Bustamante *ang lalaban diyan kasi sa magkabilang* draw *kami* (Django and I may even end up fighting for the 9-ball gold because we are in different brackets)."

OLD/ A28

RP archers show crack forms in team elims

HANOI—Florante Matan kept his fine form to finish second individual overall and power the Philippines to first place in the team eliminations of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games archery competitions yesterday at the National Sports Training Center 1 here.

Matan, who tallied 304 Monday to rip the 302 SEAG mark set by fellow Filipino Nerickzon Fraginal in the 90-meter distance, carded 1296 after firing 327 and 345 in the 50- and 30-m events yesterday to land only three points behind Indonesia's Kuswantoro.

Matan's teammates—Marvin Cordero, Arnold Rojas and Christian Cubilla—also joined Matan in the knockout Olympic round competition, which starts tomorrow.

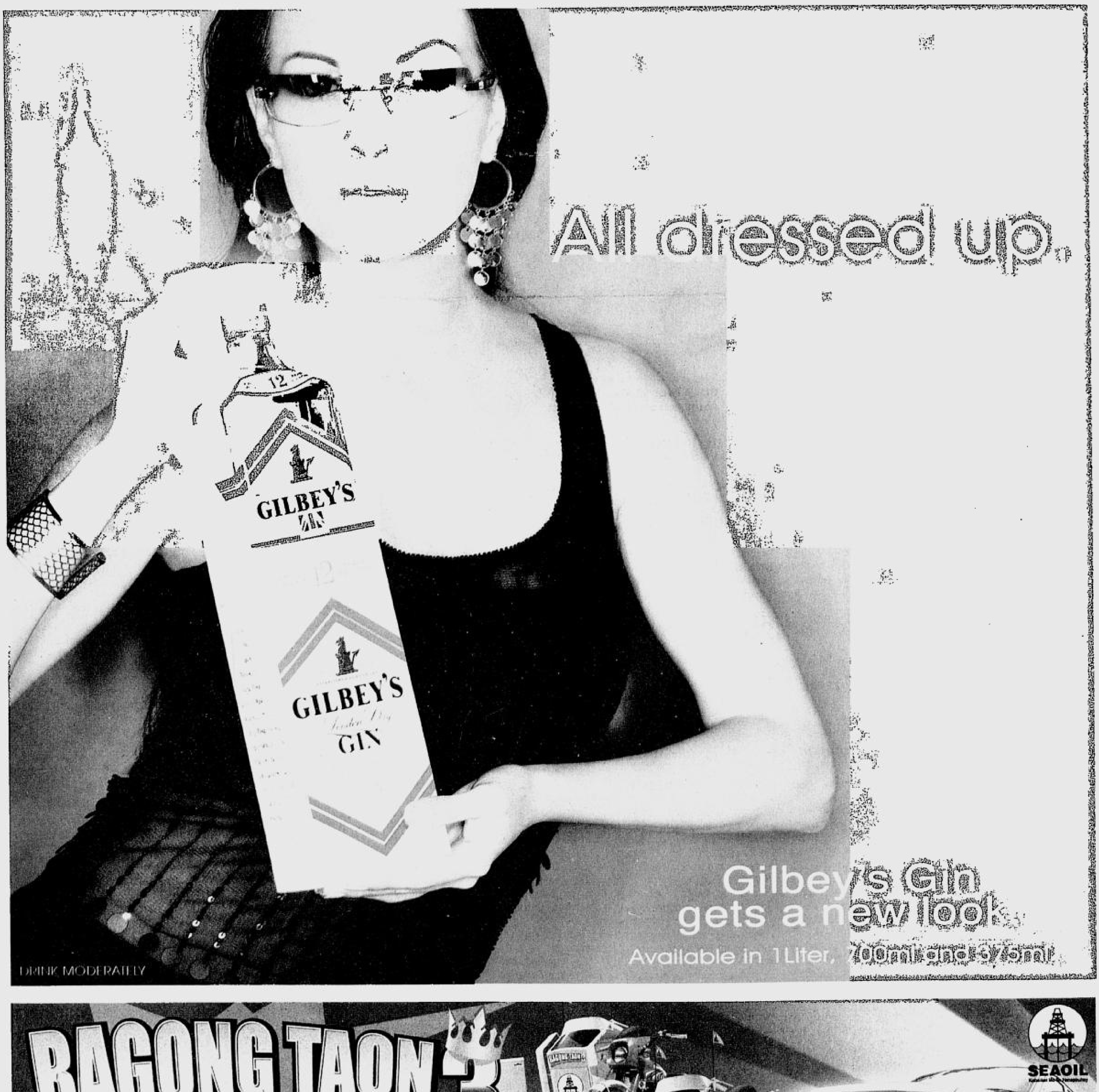
Cordero landed third with 1285. Rojas was eighth at 1274 and Cubilla finished 11th at 1255.

The Filipinos compiled a total of 3855 points to top the team eliminations and erase the 3783 mark they set last year in the Busan Asian Games.

The RP women's team of Jennifer Chan, Jasmin Figueroa, Joann Tabanag and Rachelle Anne Cabral, who all advanced to the Olympic Round earlier in the day, ranked third in the team event with 3833 points.

Matan drew a bye in the first OR stage, but Cordero, Rojas and Cubilla are pitted against Laotian Phouvieng Mounthinthay, Vietnamese Nguyen

RP/ A28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Fil-Am golf big guns plunge into action today

By Al S. Mendoza

BAGUIO CITY—The big guns shoot for historic feats starting today in the 54th Fil-Am Golf Invitational as they begin robbing a bit of the tournament's fun side at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay.

CAP-Southwoods eyes a record-shattering fifth straight championship title in the premium Fil Division, while Mizuno-DHL seeks its own mark with a third straight crown in the Am Division's championship category.

Last year's fourth straight Fil Division Championship crown won by CAP-Southwoods tied the mark set by Camp John Hay from 1957 to 1960 and Canlubang from 1991 to 1994 in the tournament presented by Smart Communications and backed by Northwest Airlines and Royal Caribbean International.

This year, Jeric Hechanova, speaking for team captain Thirdy Escano, said CAP-Southwoods is wary of Mizuno-DHL, runner-up the last two years in the Fil Division's championship flight.

"It's obvious Mizuno-DHL wants the premier title this year," said Hechanova, a main cog of CAP-Southwoods. "It has put in high-powered players in its lineup in (Marvin) Dumandan and (Tristan) Tabanas, and that should be a cause of concern for our team."

Dumandan, playing out of Riviera Golf & Country Club, has been a consistent member of the national team.

Tabanas, the 33-year-old grandson dentist of six-time Philippine Open champion Celestino Tugot, was the top individual performer for Mizuno-DHL last year in the Am Division Championship.

The CAP-Southwoods players are Artemio Murakami, Gene Bondoc, Antonio Asistio, Mark Lopez and, last year's top individual performer, Jerome Delariarte. Toru Nakajima, Juami Rocha and Erwin Vinluan are out of the team for various reasons.

Nakajima is studying in Tokyo, Rocha was transferred to the Am Division Championship flight while Vinluan moved to Mizuno-DHL.

"The boys are focused to give the opposition a tough battle," said Lovell Gopez, the new captain of Mizuno-DHL, replacing his father, Benny. "We are confident we could maintain our winning tradition."

Dumandan, Tabanas and Vinluan, the U-Bix Riviera National Pro-Am winner with pro Noli Kempis in 2001, are joined in the Mizuno-DHL team by last year's mainstays Paul Miñoza and Romeo Jaraula.

Set to challenge Mizuno-DHL in the Am Division Championship are CAP-Southwoods' Lyndon Barril, Jun Jun Plana, Hanson So Jr., Michael Bibat and Rocha.

Kit Lopez took Tabanas' place in the Mizuno-DHL lineup for the Am Division battle. The team's other players include last year's regulars Jimmy Feliciano, Lawrence Negrido, Rudy Amata and Greg Laguatan.

Early results in the lower-ranked divisions showed Pines Golf of California and Early Birds II leading their respective groups.

In yesterday's Fil Division Flight E, Emil Alviar III, Joseph Alviar and Emil Alviar fired 24, 23 and 21 points, respectively, to power Pines Golf of California to the leadership board. The Alviar brothers got 19 from Lester Majarucon for PGC's 87-176.

Fil Division Flight F was paced by Early Birds on 68-142, just two points up on Sustagen Premium II, in the tournament sponsored by, among others, Eva Air, Pagcor, Wilson Sports, Heritage Park, San Miguel Corp., Caltex, Bagnio Jungolf, Francis Calma, Viva water, CAP and U-Bix Corp.

Streaking Beermen shoot for 2-0 edge

Johnson doubtful starter

IMPORT Kwan Johnson is a doubtful starter, but San Miguel Beer is not overly worried when it shoots for a 2-0 lead over Coca-Cola in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

GAME TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
7 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs San Miguel Beer

Johnson, who failed to finish Game 1 with a groin injury, worked out with the Beermen yesterday but SMB coach Jong Uichico has doubts whether his import could be of help in Game 2 of the best-of-seven series set at 7 p.m.

"We still don't know if he could play. It will all depend on how he feels before the game starts," said Uichico, whose Beermen drew first blood with an 84-81 victory Sunday.

But Uichico said the Beermen are ready with contingency plans if Johnson is deemed unfit to play.

Johnson hurt his left groin and aggravated it when he tried to defend against a speeding Ato Morano near the close of the third quarter.

But the Beermen hardly missed Johnson as Danny Ildefonso filled the scoring slack and even pulled off a defensive gem by stealing the ball from Tee McClary down the stretch that sealed SMB's victory.

McClary, a heavy contender for the Best Import of the conference award, will again be a vital source of firepower for the Tigers, who are gunning for a second title crown in four straight Finals appearances.

With Johnson a doubtful starter, McClary can create matchup problems for the Beermen if Uichico decides to focus the defense on him.

The Beermen will surely suffer if they give Rudy Hatfield, Jeffrey Cariaso, Poch Juinio, Johnny Abarrientos, Morano and Rafi Reavis enough shooting room.

Coke coach Chot Reyes said adjustment is the key word for the Tigers, who need to show their old energy and execute their plays to perfection to even the series.

But even without Johnson, the Tigers are expected to have their hands full against Dorian Peña, Nic Belasco, Olsen Racela, Boybits Victoria, Joey Mente and the two-time MVP Ildefonso.

Ildefonso is flashing his old form after sitting out majority of the season due to various lower body injuries.

With the spring back in his legs, Ildefonso, who captured back-to-back MVPs in 1999-2000, dominated the shaded lane with Peña as Johnson watched from the bench.

June Navarro

OLSEN Racela of SMB swipes the ball away from Johnny Abarrientos of Coca-Cola during their game Sunday. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Mariners post twin kill

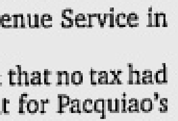
PHILIPPINE Maritime Institute whipped Rizal Technological University, 96-79, and National College of Business and Arts, 105-94, to rise to the top of the Group B standings in the 11th National Capital Region Athletic Association men's basketball tournament at the RTU gym.

The Mariners' twin triumphs, their fourth and fifth straight in the tournament, put to the shade the defending champion St. Francis of Assisi Doves' 71-64 victory against the San Sebastian College-Cavite Baycats. It was the Doves' fourth win in five starts, the same card of their victims, in Group A.

RTU later beat Lyceum, 84-80.

Pacquiao US fight taxes safe in bank

BARE EYE



Recab Trinidad

THE $350,000 question is: Did Manny Pacquiao cheat the government of the United States on taxes?

And what would happen to Pacquiao, world boxing's newest celebrity, if he's found guilty of tax evasion?

These had to be asked following that story by Salven Lagumbay, star sports scribe of the Cebu Daily News, on Pacquiao's tax problems which appeared in the INQUIRER sports section yesterday.

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NESTOR Manalang (right), trainer of imported horse Royal Catch, receives the winner's trophy from PSA board member Camilo Mendez during the awarding ceremonies of the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) Cup Stakes race Sunday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite. At center is Jaime C. Dilag, chair of the sponsoring Philippine Racing Commission. Owned by Hermie Esguerra, Royal Catch beat five others in the one-mile race held in honor of former Tempo Sports editor and avid horseracing fan Rudy Navarro.

Fil-Am golf big guns plunge into action today

By Al S. Mendoza

BAGUIO CITY—The big guns shoot for historic feats starting today in the 54th Fil-Am Golf Invitational as they begin robbing a bit of the tournament's fun side at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay.

CAP-Southwoods eyes a record-shattering fifth straight championship title in the premium Fil Division, while Mizuno-DHL seeks its own mark with a third straight crown in the Am Division's championship category.

Last year's fourth straight Fil Division Championship crown won by CAP-Southwoods tied the mark set by Camp John Hay from 1957 to 1960 and Canlubang from 1991 to 1994 in the tournament presented by Smart Communications and backed by Northwest Airlines and Royal Caribbean International.

This year, Jeric Hechanova, speaking for team captain Thirdy Escano, said CAP-Southwoods is wary of Mizuno-DHL, runner-up the last two years in the Fil Division's championship flight.

"It's obvious Mizuno-DHL wants the premier title this year," said Hechanova, a main cog of CAP-Southwoods. "It has put in high-powered players in its lineup in (Marvin) Dumandan and (Tristan) Tabanas, and that should be a cause of concern for our team."

Dumandan, playing out of Riviera Golf & Country Club, has been a consistent member of the national team.

Tabanas, the 33-year-old grandson dentist of six-time Philippine Open champion Celestino Tugot, was the top individual performer for Mizuno-DHL last year in the Am Division Championship.

The CAP-Southwoods players are Artemio Murakami, Gene Bondoc, Antonio Asistio, Mark Lopez and, last year's top individual performer, Jerome Delariarte. Toru Nakajima, Juami Rocha and Erwin Vinluan are out of the team for various reasons.

Nakajima is studying in Tokyo, Rocha was transferred to the Am Division Championship flight while Vinluan moved to Mizuno-DHL.

"The boys are focused to give the opposition a tough battle," said Lovell Gopez, the new captain of Mizuno-DHL, replacing his father, Benny. "We are confident we could maintain our winning tradition."

Dumandan, Tabanas and Vinluan, the U-Bix Riviera National Pro-Am winner with pro Noli Kempis in 2001, are joined in the Mizuno-DHL team by last year's mainstays Paul Miñoza and Romeo Jaraula.

Set to challenge Mizuno-DHL in the Am Division Championship are CAP-Southwoods' Lyndon Barril, Jun Jun Plana, Hanson So Jr., Michael Bibat and Rocha.

Kit Lopez took Tabanas' place in the Mizuno-DHL lineup for the Am Division battle. The team's other players include last year's regulars Jimmy Feliciano, Lawrence Negrido, Rudy Amata and Greg Laguatan.

Early results in the lower-ranked divisions showed Pines Golf of California and Early Birds II leading their respective groups.

In yesterday's Fil Division Flight E, Emil Alviar III, Joseph Alviar and Emil Alviar fired 24, 23 and 21 points, respectively, to power Pines Golf of California to the leadership board. The Alviar brothers got 19 from Lester Majarucon for PGC's 87-176.

Fil Division Flight F was paced by Early Birds on 68-142, just two points up on Sustagen Premium II, in the tournament sponsored by, among others, Eva Air, Pagcor, Wilson Sports, Heritage Park, San Miguel Corp., Caltex, Bagnio Jungolf, Francis Calma, Viva water, CAP and U-Bix Corp.

Streaking Beermen shoot for 2-0 edge

Johnson doubtful starter

IMPORT Kwan Johnson is a doubtful starter, but San Miguel Beer is not overly worried when it shoots for a 2-0 lead over Coca-Cola in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

GAME TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
7 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs San Miguel Beer

Johnson, who failed to finish Game 1 with a groin injury, worked out with the Beermen yesterday but SMB coach Jong Uichico has doubts whether his import could be of help in Game 2 of the best-of-seven series set at 7 p.m.

"We still don't know if he could play. It will all depend on how he feels before the game starts," said Uichico, whose Beermen drew first blood with an 84-81 victory Sunday.

But Uichico said the Beermen are ready with contingency plans if Johnson is deemed unfit to play.

Johnson hurt his left groin and aggravated it when he tried to defend against a speeding Ato Morano near the close of the third quarter.

But the Beermen hardly missed Johnson as Danny Ildefonso filled the scoring slack and even pulled off a defensive gem by stealing the ball from Tee McClary down the stretch that sealed SMB's victory.

McClary, a heavy contender for the Best Import of the conference award, will again be a vital source of firepower for the Tigers, who are gunning for a second title crown in four straight Finals appearances.

With Johnson a doubtful starter, McClary can create matchup problems for the Beermen if Uichico decides to focus the defense on him.

The Beermen will surely suffer if they give Rudy Hatfield, Jeffrey Cariaso, Poch Juinio, Johnny Abarrientos, Morano and Rafi Reavis enough shooting room.

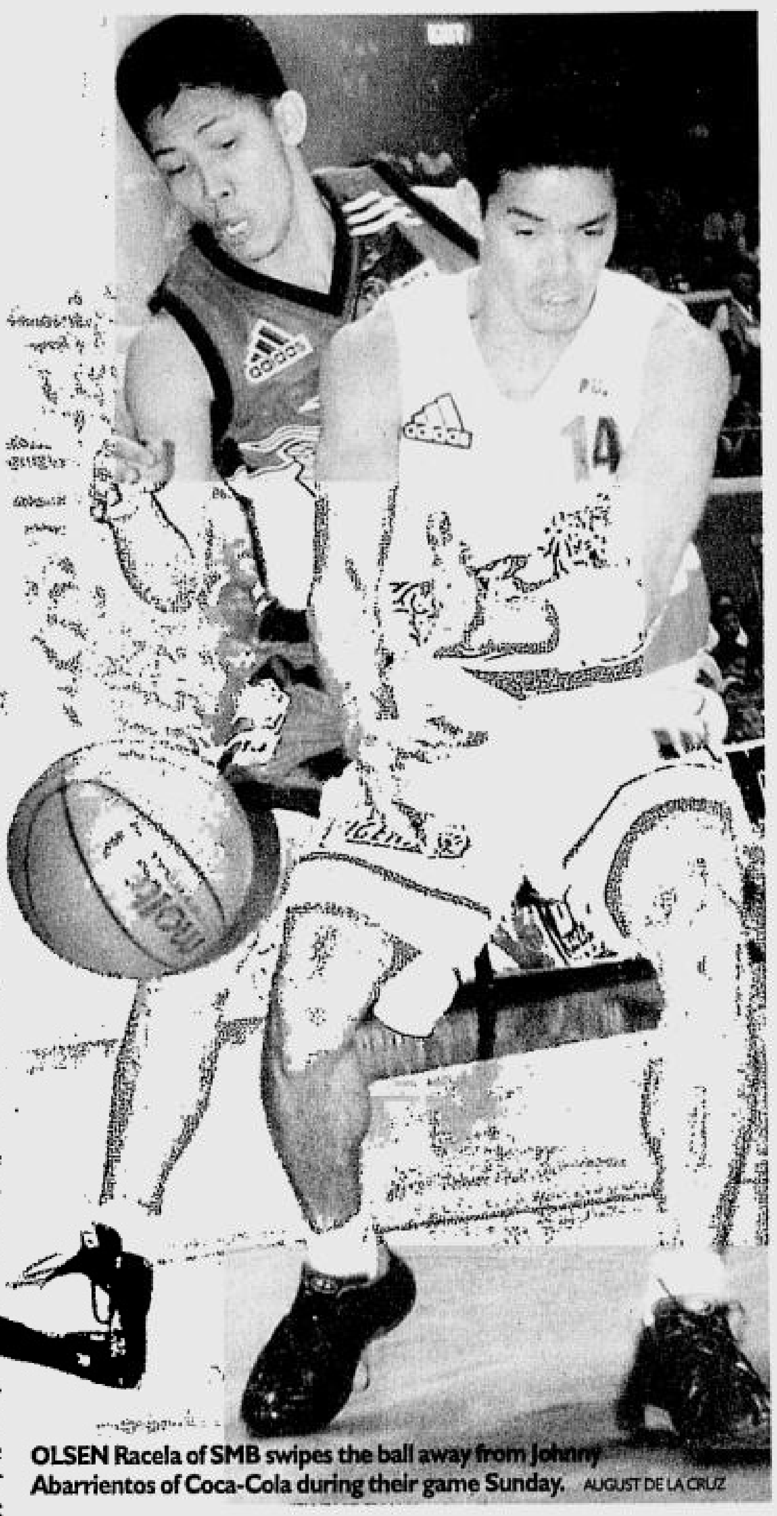
Coke coach Chot Reyes said adjustment is the key word for the Tigers, who need to show their old energy and execute their plays to perfection to even the series.

But even without Johnson, the Tigers are expected to have their hands full against Dorian Peña, Nic Belasco, Olsen Racela, Boybits Victoria, Joey Mente and the two-time MVP Ildefonso.

Ildefonso is flashing his old form after sitting out majority of the season due to various lower body injuries.

With the spring back in his legs, Ildefonso, who captured back-to-back MVPs in 1999-2000, dominated the shaded lane with Peña as Johnson watched from the bench.

June Navarro



OLSEN Racela of SMB swipes the ball away from Johnny Abarrientos of Coca-Cola during their game Sunday. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Mariners post twin kill

PHILIPPINE Maritime Institute whipped Rizal Technological University, 96-79, and National College of Business and Arts, 105-94, to rise to the top of the Group B standings in the 11th National Capital Region Athletic Association men's basketball tournament at the RTU gym.

The Mariners' twin triumphs, their fourth and fifth straight in the tournament, put to the shade the defending champion St. Francis of Assisi Doves' 71-64 victory against the San Sebastian College-Cavite Baycats. It was the Doves' fourth win in five starts, the same card of their victims, in Group A.

RTU later beat Lyceum, 84-80.

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Pacquiao US fight taxes safe in bank

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

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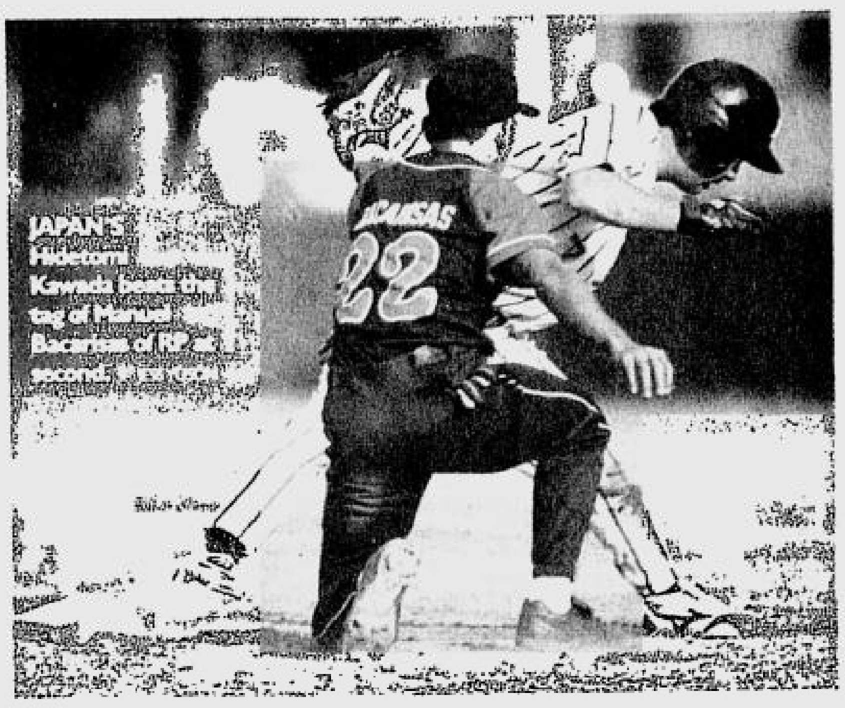
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Japanese clobber Blu Boys

By Dennis U. Eroa

TOO classy.

Defending champion Japan blasted two solo home runs to highlight its awesome hitting against two Philippine pitchers and won, 9-2, yesterday to reach the finals of the 7th Asian men's softball championship at the Rizal Memorial ballpark.



JAPAN'S Hidetomi Kawada beats the tag of Manuel Bacarisas of RP at second. [illegible]

The RP Blu Boys, the 1995 Asian Champions, drew first blood on top of the second inning, but Mazakusa Yokota and Shinichi Nagayoshi homered in the lower second and in the third to chase starting pitcher Roger Rojas.

As Zamboanga City's Florante Acuña, who took over from Rojas, kept the defending champion at bay, first baseman Romeo Bumagat tied it for RP at 2-2 in the fifth inning following a single by Joel Binarao.

But the Japanese got to Acuña in the sixth and all hell broke loose as they came up with a seven-run explosion on six hits and two hit-by-pitch walks.

"My pitcher got clobbered but it's part of the game," said coach Reynaldo "Baby" Manzanares.

A member of the Philippine squad which saw action in the 1968 (Oklahoma) and 1972 (Manila) World Championships, Manzanares remained confident of the Blu Boys' chances.

To earn a rematch with the Japanese, who beat them in 1999 at the same venue, the Blu Boys must repeat over Chinese-Taipei at 11 a.m. today. If the Filipinos win, they will clash with the Japanese for the title at 3 p.m.

"I remain confident," said Manzanares, who will probably send Mark Rae Ramirez and Sonny Boy Acuña to pitch against the Japanese.

The Blu Boys had a chance to pull ahead in the fifth as a sacrifice bunt by Manuel Bacarisas sent Apolonio Rosales and Manolito Binarao in scoring positions.

But Japan's ace pitcher Nobunori Nishimura, who replaced Tatsuya Hamaguchi, fanned Romeo Bumagat on two fastballs. Nishimura had earlier struck out Ramirez, who had five RBIs before the game.

Regardless of its match against Chinese-Taipei, the Philippines is already assured of one of the three Asian slots for the World Championships in Christchurch, New Zealand next year.

Thailand demolished India, 3-0, and Indonesia beat Iran, 10-0, in a pair of no-bearing contest earlier.

Mendoza, Ferrer share nat'l duathlon honors

RYAN Mendoza and Michelle Ferrer both came from behind to rule their respective divisions in the National Duathlon Championship that started and finished at the Clearwater Country Club inside Clark Field in Pampanga Sunday.

It was a back-to-back victory for the 27-year-old Mendoza, who also ruled last year's inaugural championship held in Subic.

Mendoza trailed after the 10K leg, went straight to the 40K bike stage without changing shoes and grabbed the lead just 5 kilometers into the race. Fil-Am entry Arlan Macasieb finished second in 1:59.04, behind Mendoza's 1:55.50.

Jeff Valdez, a waiter at the PMA in Baguio, finished third in the event sanctioned by TRAP and sponsored by Speed, Enervon, Promax, CDC, POC, and Clearwater Country Club.

David is PBL top gun; Santos shines

GARY David, Montaña's sweet-shooting forward, emerged as the scoring leader at the end of the first round of eliminations in the 2003 PBL Platinum Cup.

The MVP of the first conference (Sunkist Unity Cup), the 6-foot-3 David tallied 99 points in six games for a 16.50 average.

While making only 9-of-29 tries from the three-point area, the soft-spoken David shot a 58.33 percent clip overall.

He also figured well in steals, finishing fourth with 1.5 steals a game, behind ICTSI's Dino Aldeguer, who had 16 steals in six games for a 2.6 average.

Welcoat's James Yap, who like David is also a member of the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier team that will defend its title in the SEA Games starting Saturday, was overtaken by Fash Liquid Detergent's Peter June Simon at second spot.

The 6-foot-1 Simon, the pride of Makilala, North Cotabato, finished with a 15.8 average followed by Yap (14.6), Blustar's Jenkins Mesina (13.0), Montaña's Jondan Salvador (12.17), Welcoat's Ervin Sotto (12.14), ICTSI's Joseph Yeo (11.83), ICTSI's Mark Cardona (11.57), Sunkist-UST's Jemal Vizcarra (11.50) and Blustar's Lou Gatombato (11.20).

Arwind Santos, a rookie from Viva Mineral Water-FEU, outshone the league's celebrated big men, among them Welcoat's 6-foot-7 Sotto and 6-foot-5 Marc Pingris and Fash's Rich Alvarez, as he topped the rebounding department with 10.20 a game.

The slim, high-leaping Santos was also the top offensive rebounder with 23. The 6-foot-5 Salvador was No. 2 with a 9.20 followed by Alvarez (9.0), Cardona (7.0) and Pingris (6.14).

Veteran Alex Compton of Sunkist-UST showed the way in assists with 5.43 feeds per game followed by Welcoat's Paul Artadi (5.14), Viva-FEU's Dennis Miranda (4.5), Blustar's Erick dela Cuesta (4.17), Fash's Eugene Tan (3.86).

GAMES TOMORROW ***(UST Gym)***
1:45 p.m.—Blustar vs ICTSI
4 p.m.—Viva-FEU vs Sunkist-UST

MTRCB RATING G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

SHEP
NOTHING EATEN. NOTHING GAINED

SHEP IS PLAYED BY: ODIE
VOICE BY: CARL REINER
BREED: BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

THE BIG MOUNTAIN DOG ODIE BRINGS THE ROLE OF SHEP TO LIFE. DIRECTOR HOFFMAN FOUND HIM AN EXCELLENT PERFORMER ALTHOUGH HIS YOUNG CO-STARS SOMETIMES COMPLAINED ABOUT THE EXCESS DROOL THEY'D GET SOAKED WITH WHEN WORKING VERY CLOSE. HE IS NATURALLY OUTGOING AND WAS WILLING TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH ALL HIS CO-STARS.

NELLY PAPER TRAINED

NELLY IS PLAYED BY: "MO' "
VOICE BY: "BRITTANY MURPHY"
BREED: ITALIAN GREYHOUND

MO' IS THE MOST SENSITIVE MEMBER OF THE FOUR-LEGGED CAST. ANYTHING – FROM A LOUD VOICE TO A CHILL BREEZE – CAN SET THIS DIVA TREMBLING, BUT DESPITE BEING THIN-SKINNED, MO' IS A REAL PRO AND WAS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BRING OUT THE DEPTHS OF NELLY'S CHARACTER.

GOOD BOY!
OPENS DEC. 10

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Per DTI-NCR permit No. A3-810 series of 2003

Fitting reward for a super horse

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

SO now it's time to say goodbye to his checkered career. Wind Blown, the richest and most popular racehorse in contemporary Philippine horseracing history, is set to be retired to stud but he will leave a legacy that will live forever. And so to end on a high note his contribution to the industry and, at the same time, express his gratitude to the legions of loyal supporters, owner Hermie Esguerra will host a blockbuster "Wind Blown Racing Festival" on Sunday, Dec. 7, at the Santa Ana Park before an expected sellout crowd.

A successful businessman-sportsman, Esguerra said a special Wind Blown Classic, covering 1,800 meters and featuring the country's most outstanding horses, will highlight the celebration. "I would like to share with my fellow horse owners, breeders and the racing public this memorable day when we honor Wind Blown, a champion horse whom we all have learned to love and adore," Esguerra said.

The Classic, Esguerra stressed, will not only preserve the solid success of the racing and breeding industry, but will also enable the fans from dramatically diverse backgrounds to watch an event that will bridge the gap between rich and poor, between people of different political or religious persuasions.

"It's an incredible feeling to be part of the multitude that will pay tribute to a great horse this Sunday," said an avid racing fan who will travel all the way from Bulacan. "Wind Blown is truly the best ever."

A certified crowd-drawer, Wind Blown (Hazm-Wind in my Hair), bred by Sandy Javier and trained by Nestor Manalang, is a two-time Horse of the Year (2001 and 2002). The superhorse has registered an awesome record of 36 victories (24 of them in stakes races) in 49 career starts, earning a total of P18,978,695.50. In his third and last comeback race last Nov. 23, Wind Blown won for the third straight time (the first horse to do so in eight years) the highly successful SMB-Marho Cup organized by Putch Puyat and friends, which grossed some P43 million.

On Sunday, a short but meaningful ceremony will mark the occasion which is also supported by the Philippine Racing Commission and the Philippine Racing Club. Jockey Jeffril Zarate will ride Wind Blown when he parades around the track for the last time, while pop singer Rannie Raymundo will render the song "Wind Blown" at a free rock concert scheduled later in the day at the Santa Ana parking lot. Winning poems in the "Likha Tula" contest will be recited and a photo exhibit depicting the career of the millionaire horse will also be shown. Wind Blown caps and T-shirts will likewise be given.

Wind Blown's biggest and most prestigious victories included a hat trick in the Marho Breeders Cup (2001, 2002 and 2003), two legs of the Presidential Gold Cup (2000-01), Open Classic, Senate and Congress Cup. After losing to Golden Ballet in the First Gentleman Silver Cup last April, Wind Blown returned with a vengeance, winning in style the Saddle & Clubs Special on Oct. 26 and the 4th Philtobo-Mitra Cup on Nov. 9.

***

BRIEFLY NOTED. The ongoing PBA Reinforced Conference best-of-seven title series between San Miguel Beer and Coca-Cola is supposed to be exciting, but how come the usual SRO crowd is missing? Compared with the well-attended quarterfinal games (for instance, the Coca-Cola-Ginebra and Red Bull Barako-TNT series), Game 1 of the title series at the Araneta Coliseum last Sunday was a virtual box-office flop, with rows and rows of empty seats seen inside the cavernous Big Dome. I also gathered that the PBA television ratings have likewise gone down, losing (badly?) even to horseracing despite the fact that the latter is shown only on cable TV.

Something must be really wrong, *di ba* commissioner Noli Eala?...Coke Go-for-Goal is alive and kicking. Although it does not promise instant fame or fortune unlike basketball, the multi-awarded under-16 football program counts with a respectable number of followers addicted to it, including Carlos Loyzaga, the greatest Filipino basketball player of all time. Now based in Australia, King Caloy said in a recent interview that it was wrong for Filipino sports officials to prioritize basketball over the other sports "because there are other sporting disciplines where the Filipino athletes have a better chance of winning international honors." From an initial field of 80 teams that competed in its inaugural series in 1984, there are now some 400 teams taking part in this year's 20th edition of Coke Go-for-Goal under the guidance of lawyer Rene Adad. *Mabuhay ka,* Rene!

CHAN, third in the eliminations, takes aim at her target.

AP

RP archers s

Huy Long and Myanmar's Yang Aung Soe, respectively.

"*Talagang ni-rendahan namin si* Matan sa 50 and 30 *para hindi magkalaban-laban ang mga bata natin* (We didn't want our boys to face each other in the next round so we asked Matan to ease up)," said coach Henry Manalang.

Meanwhile, the water polo team, which dropped a heartbreaking 7-6 loss to defending champion Singapore Monday, crushed Vietnam, 16-7, at the National Aquatics Center here.

The Filipinos never gave the Vietnamese much of a chance, racing to an early sizeable lead before fending off the hosts' repeated attacks and rough tactics.

"It (win) was all due to the boys' big heart, hard work, everything," said RP coach Rey Galang, whose team wound up fifth in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur edition of the games.

The Filipinos go for their second win in three games when they play Malaysia at 12:30 p.m. today.

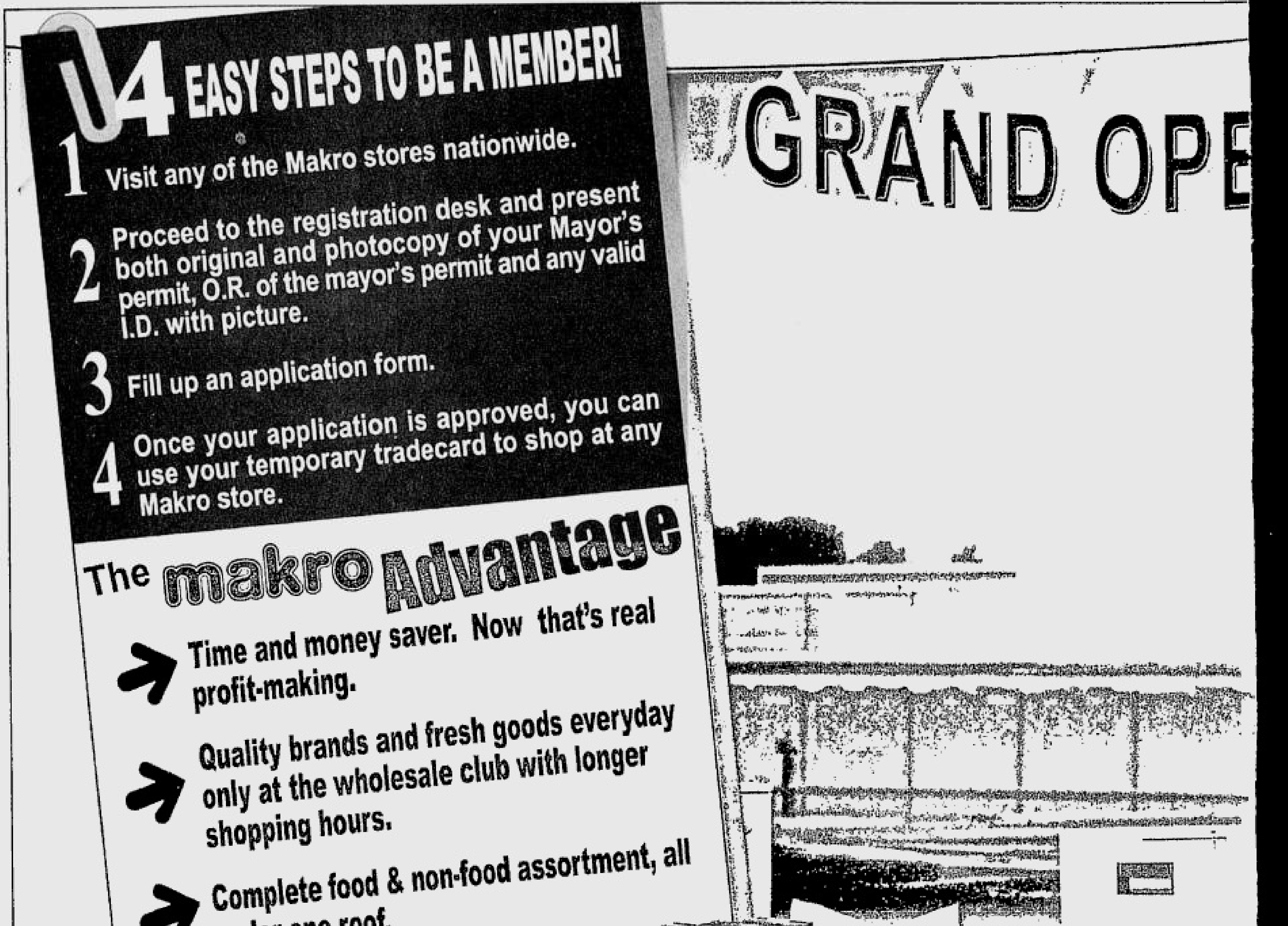
Over at the Lach Tray Stad Philippines was held to a scoreles Malaysia yesterday at the start of en's football competition.

The Filipinos missed a chance over the Malaysians, whom they en 4-0 in an invitational tourn

Old, jolly

Reyes also picked the tand Warren Kiamco and Lee Van as the team to beat in the 9-b bles, adding that either Corte tonio "Nickoy" Lining may to ball singles.

The other golds would pro come from 2001 Asian snook pion Marlon Manalo and Jam ga, silver medalists in the 20



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From page A25

Bata predicts 5 golds . . .

From page A25

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Lumpur edition, in the snooker singles and doubles.

Reyes was also tapped by the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines to play in the 3-cushion carom, 1-cushion carom and English billiards with Reynaldo Grandea.

Reyes admits his chances of winning in these events are slim, although he has already won a SEA Games gold in English billiards in the 1987 Jakarta edition.

"I haven't played English billiards since 1987, but let's see," said Reyes.

At least, he has three more days to brush up on his game as billiards and snooker competitions won't start till Friday at the Nguyen Du Sports Center.

By then, Reyes would be ready to weave magic again.

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Kuala Lumpur last month, when Marielle Benitez failed to convert a penalty kick in the 58th minute.

"The girls were tight," said coach Marlon Maro, who did not feel too happy about the outcome. "We had plenty of scoring chances but we were unlucky."

Maro added that the Malaysians concentrated on defense.

The boxers are scheduled to get going late tonight in Ho Chi Minh.

With Tani Gomez taking the place of Allan Payawal as goalie and Galang instructing his water polo boys to exert pressure all the way, the Philippine defense proved to be solid enough.

Vengeful boxers seek redemption

REVENGE, redemption, remembrance, resurgence.

Filipino boxers are anchoring their campaign in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games in these code words.

They want to exact revenge on the Thais, who shut them out in the gold medal race in the Kuala Lumpur SEAG.

They want to redeem themselves in the eyes of their countrymen, who've been pinning their hopes on them to bag the country's first Olympic gold.

They want to dedicate their fights in memory of the late Rene Fortaleza, long-time secretary general of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines who died of cancer recently.

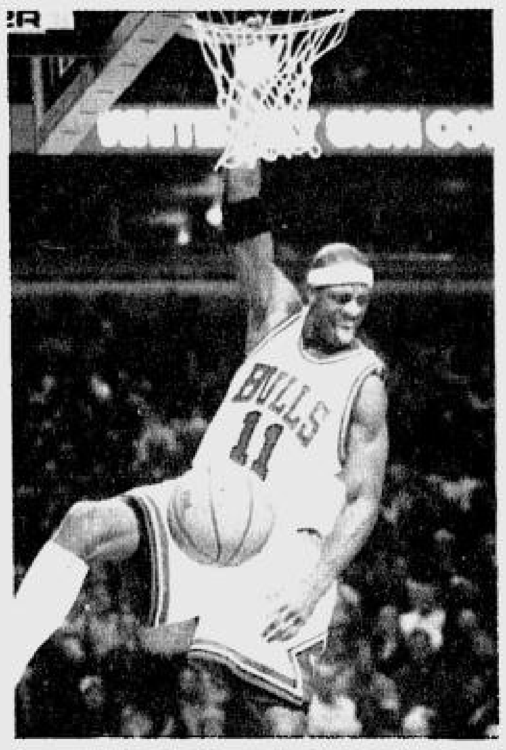
And they want to sustain the momentum of their one-gold output in the 1st Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad, India, and their three-gold haul in the pre-SEA Games tourney, both held in October.

Boxing starts at 7:50 p.m. (8:50 p.m. Manila time) today at the Phan Dinh Pung indoor stadium, with team manager Ruber Roque declaring the Filipino fighters fit and ready.

"The boys are in top shape. Their morale is high. Everyone is eager to do battle," said Roque, who was also the team manager when three RP boxers (pinweight Juanito Magliquian, bantam Joan Tripon and middleweight Maximo Tabangcura) copped gold medals in the pre-SEAG tourney in October.

Magliquian and Tripon are back, but Tabangcura was eased out by Fil-Am Christopher Camat.

All are dedicating their fights to the late Rene Fortaleza. *Roy Luarca*



WILLIAMS, acquired by the Bulls from the Toronto Raptors, dunks against the Milwaukee Bucks. AP

New-look Bulls upend Bucks; Skiles shines

CHICAGO—This latest version of the Chicago Bulls is a winner. For one night, at least.

Playing just a few hours after the trade that brought them from Toronto was finalized, Jerome Williams and Antonio Davis gave the Bulls the energy and enthusiasm they've been missing, and the Bulls made coach Scott Skiles a winner in his Chicago debut with a 97-87 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks in the NBA on Monday night.

"Oh, man. It has been a fantastic day," Davis said, a wide grin plastered across his face. "I was a little bit worried about how I was going to feel ... but the energy just kept going, kept getting better."

When the buzzer sounded, Williams and Jamal Crawford ran to the sidelines and hugged Skiles.

Williams finished with 13 points, a team-high 10 rebounds and four steals—including a floor-burner that immediately endeared him to Bulls fans. Davis had 11 points, five rebounds and three blocked shots.

The new guys weren't the only ones contributing, though. No, this was a true team effort. Crawford scored a season-high 30 points and had eight assists and eight rebounds. Eddy Curry had 22 points, including a monster dunk to stop a 12-0 Milwaukee run that had pulled the Bucks within 91-87 late in the fourth quarter.

In New York, Antonio McDyess scored just two points in his first game as a member of the Knicks, nearly a year and a half after they acquired him, and New York lost to Detroit 79-78 in overtime.

In a related development, Tim Duncan of the San Antonio Spurs was suspended for one game by the NBA on Monday for pushing an official to the floor.

Complete results:

Memphis 96, Boston 89; Detroit 79, New York 78 (OT); Chicago 97, Milwaukee 87; Utah 91, New Jersey 84; Indiana 89, Phoenix 82; LA Clippers 91, San Antonio 83.

Presidential Gold Cup race slated Dec. 14

THE RICHEST and most prestigious horse racing event in the country comes off the wraps on Dec. 14 with the holding of the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

Organized by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office in cooperation with the Manila Jockey Club Inc., the 31st annual Gold Cup race will showcase the best thoroughbreds in the land as they compete for a record pot of P2.375 million over 2,000 meters.

PCSO chair Ma. Livia "Honeygirl" de Leon underscored the importance of the annual championship during the weekly Philippine Sportswriters' Association (PSA) Forum held yesterday at the Holiday Inn Manila Pavilion.

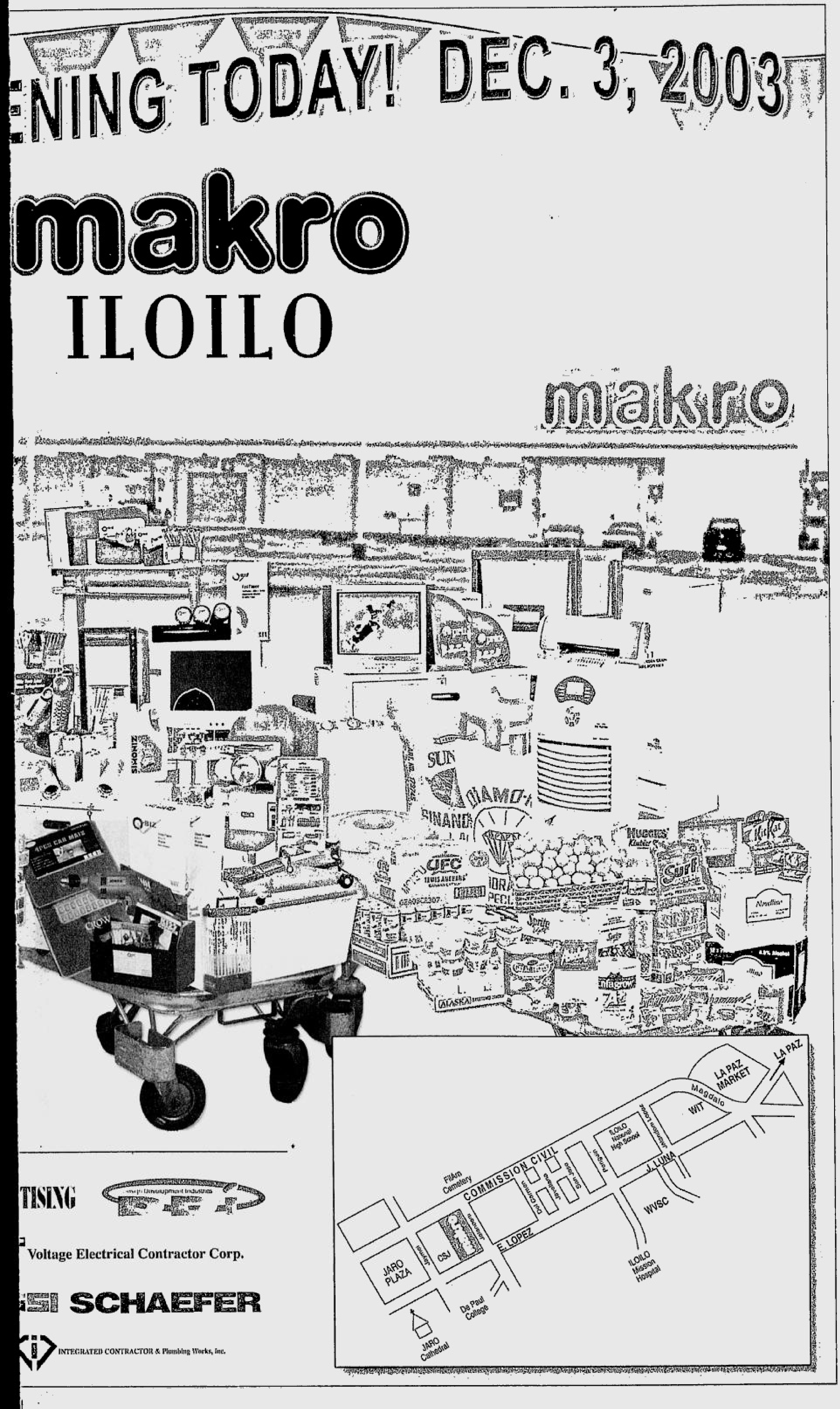
"The annual running of the Presidential Gold Cup is a reaffirmation of the PCSO's commitment to elevate the standard of horse racing in the country and provide the incentive for the improvement of the local breed," she said.

Twelve battle-scarred chargers are expected to vie, led by last year's winner Free Wind.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Laughing Matter 2. Powerhouse/Mister Cool 3. Noble Regent 4. Our Hope
Race 2--1. Ivisan Queen 2. Daytona 3. Angel Eyes 4. Solid North
Race 3--1. Kitana 2. Princess Ann 3. Victory Lap 4. Earth Angel 5. Princess Dancer
Race 4--1. Mountain Eagle 2. Miss Bobon 3. Zarsuela 4. Solo Singer
Race 5--1. Day and Night 2. Rikitik 3. Top Quest
Race 6--1. Star Worth 2. Peek A Boo 3. Super Dancer 4. Game Over 5. Fine Offer
Race 7--1. Kagilagilalas 2. Court General 3. Close Account 4. Jerold's Dream 5. Saint Michael
Race 8--1. Rolex 2. Rumaragasa 3. Slip Away 4. College Gem 5. Hurricane Doding
Race 9--1. Bullish View 2. Dynamite Jack 3. Big Mama 4. Hercules 5. Scream for Chance 6. Ang Seaman



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Lani sings while fitness buffs compete

LANI Misalucha sings while fitness buffs flex their muscles in a two-and-a-half-hour high- and low-impact marathon aerobics competition on Friday, Dec. 6, at the Harrison Plaza Annex in Malate, Manila.

The competition is divided into three categories—beginners, advance and professionals.

Beginners are those who have attended several aerobics sessions. Advance are those who have been regularly attending sessions for at least a year. Professionals are those who have been actively training for several years.

The contest proper starts at 2:50 p.m. Registration starts at 1 p.m.

The competition is spearheaded by award-winning fitness instructor Marc Dungo, who is certified by the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) and the Exercise Science Alliance (ESA) in California.

In 2002, Dungo won two international awards in fitness and has been a consistent winner in local fitness competitions.

He is also a member of international and local organizations of fitness professionals.

A total of 24 trophies will be given to the winners.

Citations will also be awarded to the best in outfit, the most energetic, the most enthusiastic, the most "adult" as well as the youngest participant.

DUNGO

Goma's 'Lola' Lydia...

From page A32

woke up this morning, my dad told me Lola was already gone."

The last time Richard talked to his grandmother was last week.

"She told me to take care of my wife (Lucy Torres) and my daughter (Juliana, 3) and my dad," the actor related.

"We knew that one day it (her death) would come, and we were prepared for it," he added. "But somehow, when it was happening..." His voice trailed off.

After that, *Lola* Lydia could only respond with a series of deep breaths. She could no longer move any part of her body, according to Richard.

"I would have wanted her to be able to celebrate her 88th birthday with us," he said. "That would be on December 23. But when she was admitted to the hospital, I already had a feeling that she wouldn't be with us on her birthday.

"When we celebrated Thanksgiving last month, she was no longer able to come. Only a couple of relatives celebrated it with us."

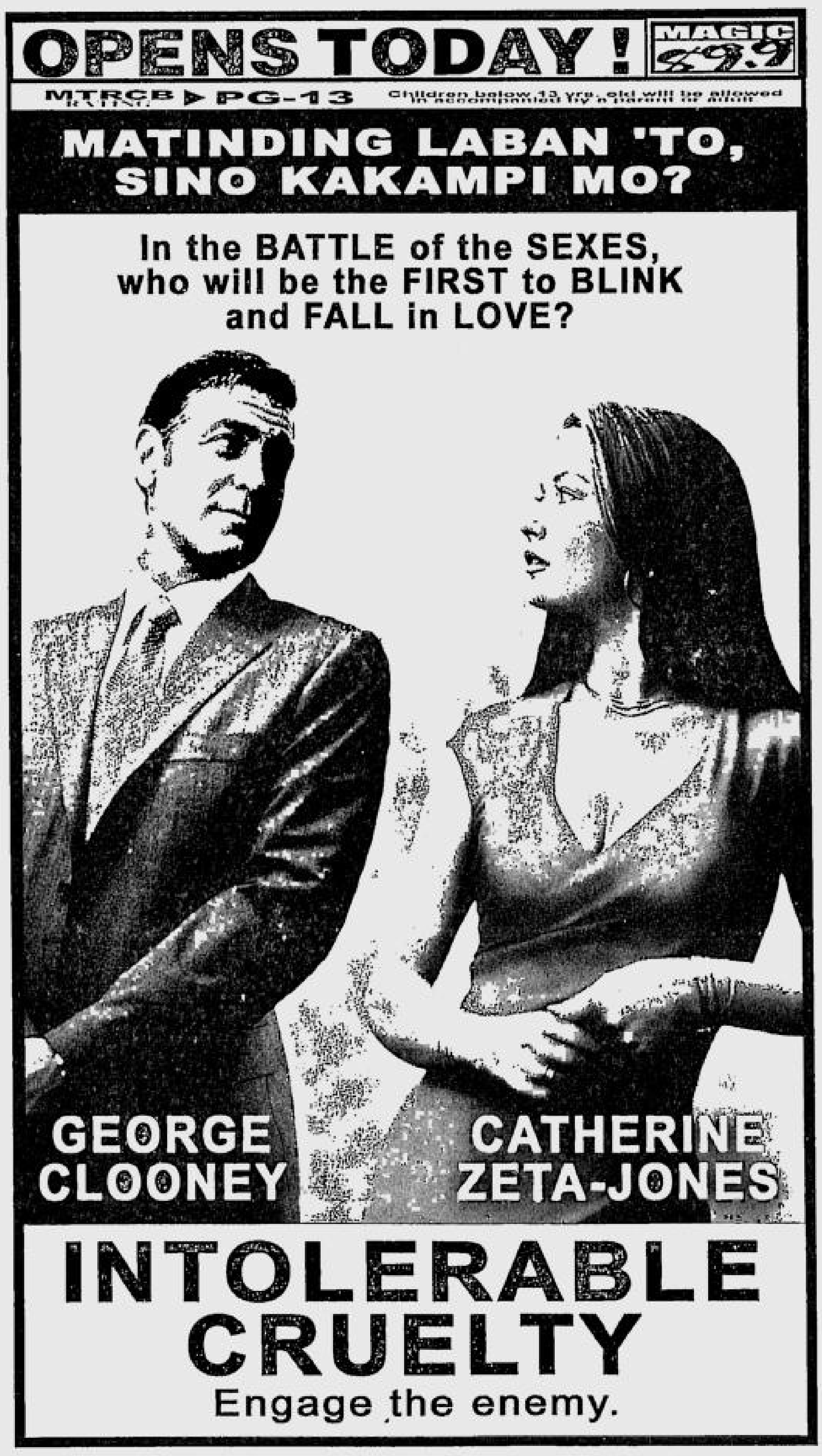
Richard, who is part of the Philippine fencing team, was supposed to leave on Friday to compete in the Southeast Asian Games to be held in the cities of Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi in Vietnam. But *Lola* Lydia would be buried on the same day at the Manila North Cemetery in La Loma, Quezon City, where her husband, Antonio, who died in 1991, is also buried. Richard will leave instead on Monday for the SEA Games.

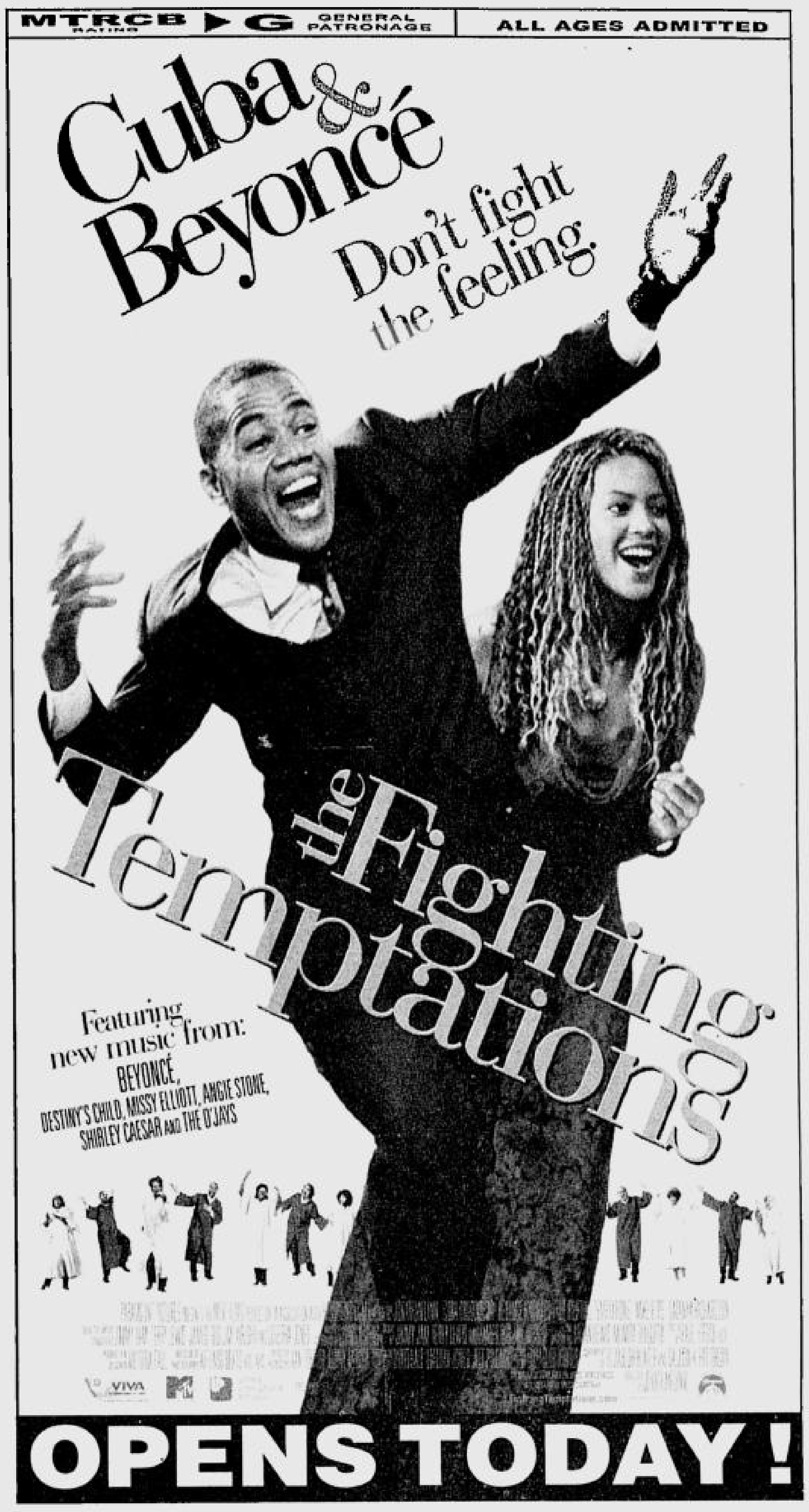
"She took care of me," he said. "I got really close to her after my mother left for the US.

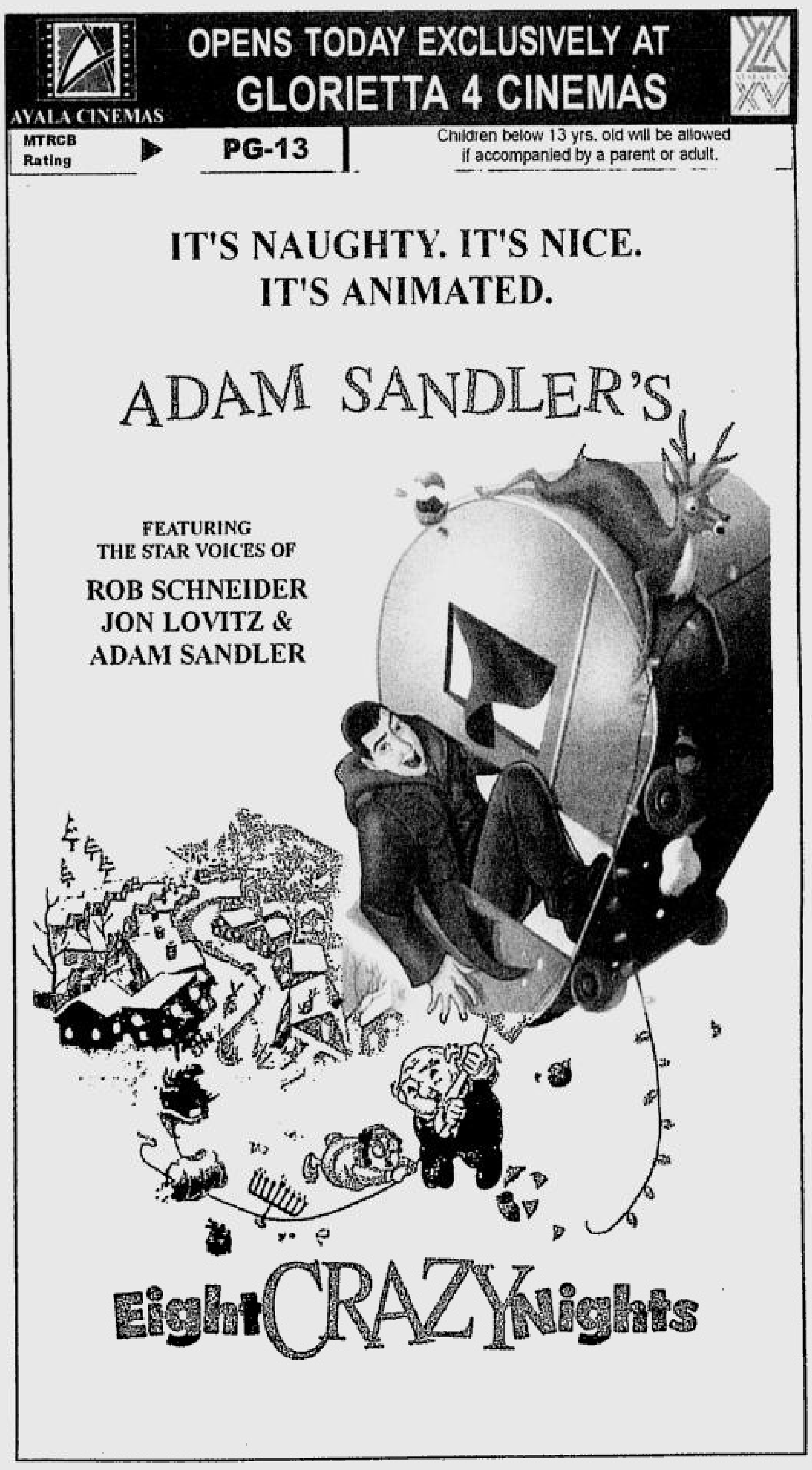
"I miss her already," he said.

OPENS DECEMBER 10
MAGIC 89.9
WARNING... IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU. As hot as today's headlines!
First the high fever, followed by shortness of breath, then dry cough, headache and muscular stiffness. Then a slow painful death awaits the victim as the demonic virus slowly devours your body tissues.
NO PLACE TO HIDE, NO PLACE TO RUN, EVIL STRIKES FROM WITHIN.
CABIN FEVER
CATCH IT!

NOW OPEN
ADMIT ONE
MOVIEWORLD
@ ROBINSONS SUPERCENTER
Cainta Junction


OPENS TODAY!
MAGIC 89.9
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
MATINDING LABAN 'TO, SINO KAKAMPI MO?
In the BATTLE of the SEXES, who will be the FIRST to BLINK and FALL in LOVE?
GEORGE CLOONEY
CATHERINE ZETA-JONES
INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
Engage the enemy.


MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
Cuba & Beyoncé
Don't fight the feeling.
the Fighting Temptations
Featuring new music from: BEYONCÉ, DESTINY'S CHILD, MISSY ELLIOTT, ANGIE STONE, SHIRLEY CAESAR AND THE O'JAYS
OPENS TODAY!


OPENS TODAY EXCLUSIVELY AT GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS
MTRCB Rating ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
IT'S NAUGHTY. IT'S NICE. IT'S ANIMATED.
ADAM SANDLER'S
FEATURING THE STAR VOICES OF ROB SCHNEIDER JON LOVITZ & ADAM SANDLER
Eight CRAZY Nights

Clueless in TV la-la-land

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MANY people dismiss much of local television as being "the pits" these days. They bemoan the tabloidization of newscasts, the exploitation, the short cuts, laziness and irresponsibility evident on a number of shows, resulting in the 'idioticization' of the TV audience.

Alas, the finger shouldn't point in just one direction. Truth to tell, one of the reasons why local TV is so bad is the fact that local televiewers are so clueless.

TV people say that they come up with shrill and shallow programs because that's what viewers here want. The ratings appear to bear them out on this, as they affirm the avid viewership that some of the lousiest shows today enjoy.

"Programming for the least common denominator" is standard industry practice to generate maximum viewership, and programs are so bad because that denominator is turning out to be so abysmally low.

Is there a way out of this downward spiral? Viewers simply have to stop being so clueless in TV la-la-land. They have to realize that TV isn't a harmless medium just because it's become practically invisible in our living rooms and bedrooms.

They have to know that TV's subliminal persuasiveness for good or bad is in fact so strong that it sells billions of pesos' worth of products, makes stars out of pretty non-talents, and even creates presidents.

So, viewers have to look at the medium in a new, more enlightened way, as a major helpmeet or predator in their individual and collective lives.

Next, they have to be told that TV networks don't "own" the channels they telecast on. The TV spectrum is in fact owned by the people, through the government. Prospective broadcasters are granted licenses to operate on those channels by the government, in exchange for the networks' pledge to provide balanced, responsible and enlightened programming.

So, if that pledge isn't kept, as it all too often is these days, those licenses may be challenged, if the government's regulatory offices are on their toes.

If viewers realize that they ultimately own the local TV spectrum, they'll be less timid about complaining that the TV networks haven't been servicing their needs in terms of balanced and responsible programming.

Viewers should also know that they can seek redress, not just from pertinent government agencies, but also from the erring networks themselves. It's true that a few complaints won't do the trick, but if hundreds of concerned viewers feel strongly about something and let their collective voices be heard, many TV people will be forced to listen, and to act on those complaints.

The best way to maximize the impact of viewers' opinions is to express them in the media, in letters to newspapers, etc. If enough people do this, the process of redress will be speeded up that much more.

It's high time that viewers stop blaming everybody else and start asserting their right to get the responsible programming they deserve. In so doing, they cease to be so sadly clueless in TV la-la-land.

Feedback

FROM **Isabel Sevilla Soriano,** Dept. of English and Applied Linguistics, De La Salle Taft, and the Dept. of Communication, FEU: "Bless you! Help alter those blasted scripts that live on yuk characterizations. Give us lecturers respected columns to refer to when decrying the popular Filipino movie roles that defy intelligent analyses.

"Further, remind those yuk hosts how their platitudes show up their yuk minds. Show up those bosses who can't see beyond titles and the smiles of hosts. I'm all yuk today—enough is enough. Thanks so!"

Limp Bizkit in Manila

LIMP Bizkit's "Summer Sanitarium World Tour" has been setting the United States on fire, and on Dec. 7, it hits the Philippines (at the Ultra Open Field).

The "headbanging, heart-thumping and blood pressure-boosting" group is also playing gigs in Bali, Bangkok, Singapore and Japan.

"When **Lethal, Mike, John** and **Sam** get together, it reeks of pure, raw emotional havoc!" screams a Bizkit booster. OK, OK, we believe you! Call Ticketnet at 911-5555.

Ate Glow to FPJ: Study, study

By Nini Valera

ACTION star Fernando Poe Jr. should devote the next five months before the elections next year to "reading and studying the history of the Filipinos so he would not make the same mistakes the previous leaders had committed."

That piece of advice is from Rene-Boy Faculan, the 22-year-old actor who is more popular as a girl. He parodies President Macapagal-Arroyo on stage and television and is more well known as Ate Glow.

"If there's no stopping him anymore in running for president, he should devote the remaining months (before the elections) to studying," said Ate Glow in Filipino.

Poe, 64, did not even finish high school.

Faculan is a Mass Communications student of the University of the Philippines whose class standing is magna cum laude.

He refused to be Ate Glow when discussing Poe, but agreed to speak about the actor's candidacy as Rene, the person.

"I only know of him," he said. "I know him as the king of Philippine movies or the king of action (movies). But I have been told that he is a good man. Everybody I know in show business says FPJ is a good person. I also know that he's always being asked to be a sponsor at the weddings of movie stars, or at baptisms, and other occasions," Rene added.

"But being president cannot compare with being an actor or being a housewife. A president would be a more effective leader if he had a background in politics, or if he had studied management or political science."

But Rene clarified that he was not questioning Poe's credentials as against the credentials of presidents who graduated from Harvard University in the US or from the University of the Philippines or even had doctorates.

"What the Philippines needs today is a leader that would liberate the country from moral and financial poverty," Rene said in Filipino.

He thinks Poe should no longer campaign as he is already a well-known celebrity around the Philippines.

"*Ang sa akin ay kailangan niyang gugulin ang natitirang panahon sa pag-aaral* (He should spend the remaining time to studying)," he stressed. "*Pati na ang iba pang* presidentiables. *Siguro, huwag na lang nilang ilaan ang nalalabi pang panahon sa pangangampanya kung gusto nilang umunlad ang bayan. Sa palagay ko, kilala naman silang lahat ng mga tao* (The other presidential candidates should also stop campaigning if they want the country to prosper. I think the people already know them well enough)."

The 2004 election will be the first time that Rene will vote.

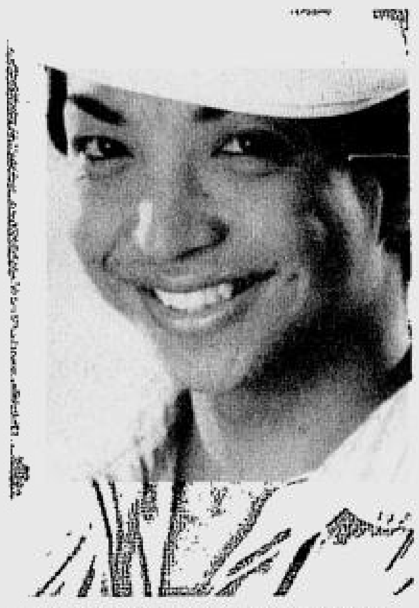
He said he plans to quit show business next year. He wants to direct movies and plans to study film in India, whose "political movies are really great." And if he had the money, he would study film in France.

In the meantime, Rene is making the most of his show biz status and has done two movies so far. His first was "Young Heart" where he played nursemaid to lead star Heart Evangelista. But in his second movie "Gagamboy," MAQ Productions entry in the Metro Manila Film Festival 2003, Rene has fight scenes where he gets to defend himself against the bad guys.

"My role here is not degrading in the sense that even though I play the part of a gay tailor, I am not the butt of jokes or the comic relief as gays mostly are in local movies," Rene explained. "I was able to show to the people and to the audience that a gay person is not necessarily a wimp."

But how he wishes he could act straight, even if being gay had not given him a neurosis.

"No one really looked down on me when I was growing up," he claimed. "Maybe, as they say, because I am intelligent and I respected myself. Or, maybe because my father was a cop. I love him and my whole family for not resenting the fact that I'm gay. I've known I was gay since I was 2."



COP'S CHILD. Rene-Boy Factoran keeps his self-respect.

'Myxmo 2003' at Rizal Park

SHOW TIME

IN NOVEMBER 2002, thousands filled the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City to witness a gathering of the country's top musicians in "Myxmo!"

It is the musical event's second year, and it has become an annual tradition.

This year, "Myxmo 2003" features more than 30 popular performers, including Parokya ni Edgar, Francis M, Sugarfree, DJ Kimosave, Sarah Geronimo, Rivermaya, Sun Valley Crew, Moonstar 88, Jimmy Bondoc, DJ Arbie Won, Barbie's Cradle, Jay-R, Sandwich, Seven Shots of Wisdom, Imago and Cebu-based Urban Dub, and many others.

"Myxmo 2003" happens on Friday, Dec. 5, starting at 7 p.m., at the Rizal Park kite area.

Admission to "Myxmo 2003" is free.

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"WALANG HANGGAN" stars (from left) Oyo Boy Sotto, Valerie Concepcion, Iya Villania and Andrew Scheimer

DID YOU KNOW...

'60s screen heartthrob **Eddie Gutierrez** and his wife, the ever-protective **Anabelle Rama** were dining with former senator **Nikki Coseteng** at the Mini Shabu-Shabu at the Shangri-la Plaza in Mandaluyong City last Friday night. The restaurant's staffers said the three are regular customers.

Ghostly love story premieres on GMA 7

THE NEWEST and freshest faces on TV are now part of your afternoon, through the new drama series, "Walang Hanggan," which premiered last Monday at 2:30 p.m. on GMA 7.

The series features teen actors Oyo Boy Sotto and Valerie Concepcion, who was recently named by Star Awards for Television as best new female artist.

They play Basti and Almira who fall in love after their first meeting in an old house. Basti, however, is committed to Rachel (Iya Villania), and Almira to Emil (Andrew Scheimer), her childhood sweetheart.

Basti and Almira decide to break up with Rachel and Emil and vow to see each other in the old house to continue their love for one another. But Almira's breakup with Emil ends in tragedy. Basti, meanwhile, waits for Almira, unaware of the tragic accident.

But Almira is still able to be with Basti to fulfill her promise of eternal love.

Ruel Bayani directs from the teleplay of RJ Nuevas.

Also in "Walang Hanggan" are are Miko Sotto, Teri Onor, Sharmaine Suarez, Marissa Sanchez, Zoren Legaspi and Perla Baustista.

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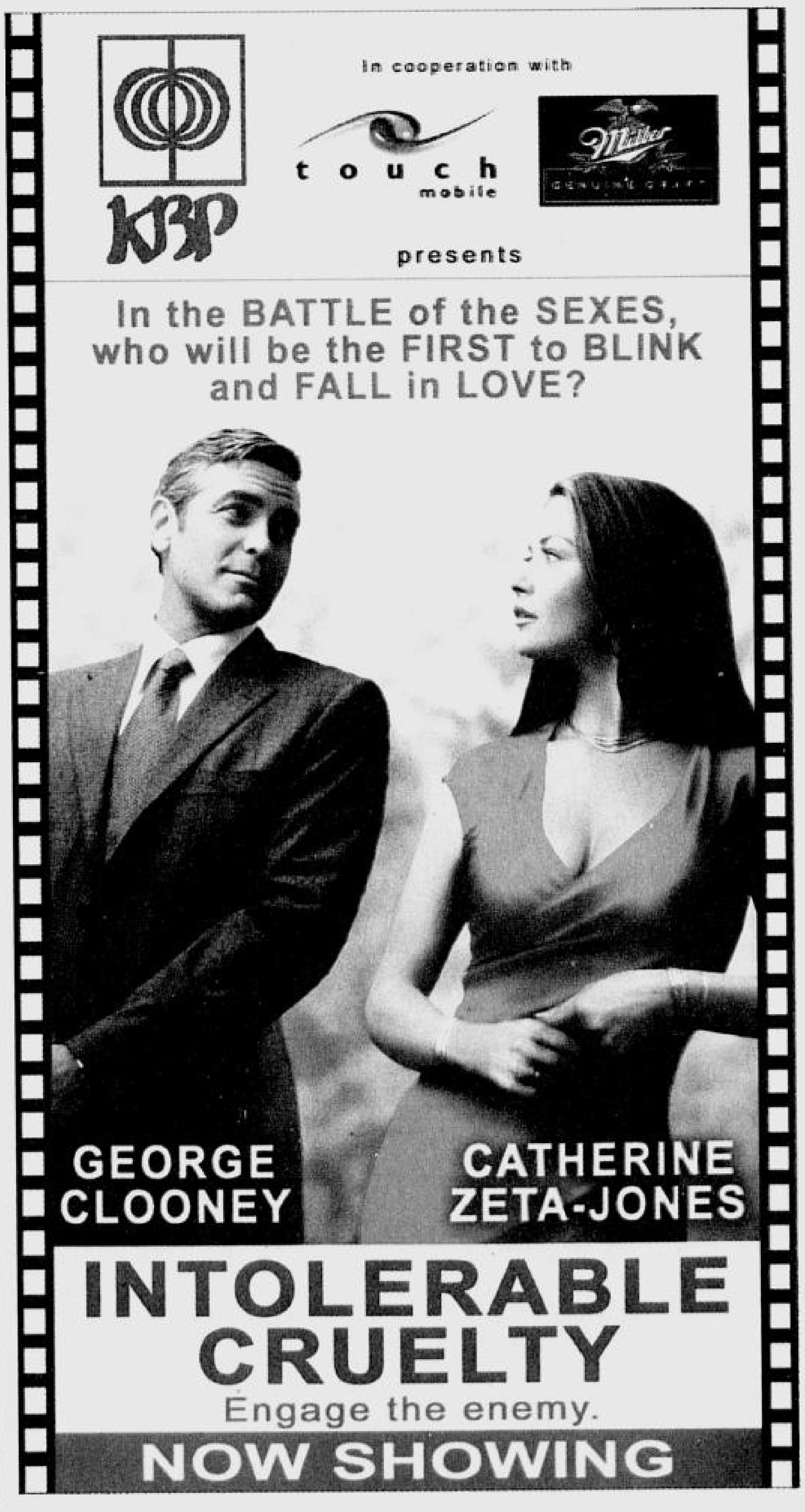

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

LYDIA KELLY GOMEZ, with her favorite grandchild. She was 87.

'I MISS HER ALREADY'

Goma's 'Lola' Lydia dies

By Nini Valera

THE GRANDMOTHER of actor Richard Gomez died at 8:10 a.m. yesterday at the Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center in San Juan, Metro Manila.

Lydia Kelly Gomez was 87. Richard is known to be very close to her.

In a cell phone conversation yesterday afternoon, Richard, 37, told INQUIRER Entertainment that his *Lola* Lydia died of cancer which was discovered late last year. He said the cancer started in her nose and spread to her spine, lungs and bones.

Richard was raised by *Lola* Lydia since his parents, former sexy actress Stella Suarez and Ed Gomez, left for the US in 1987.

"She has been in and out of the hospital for several months now," said Richard. "I think the cancer was caused by her smoking. She had been smoking since she was 17, and she stopped only three months ago."

The actor said *Lola* Lydia's doctor had advised against chemotherapy to treat the cancer.

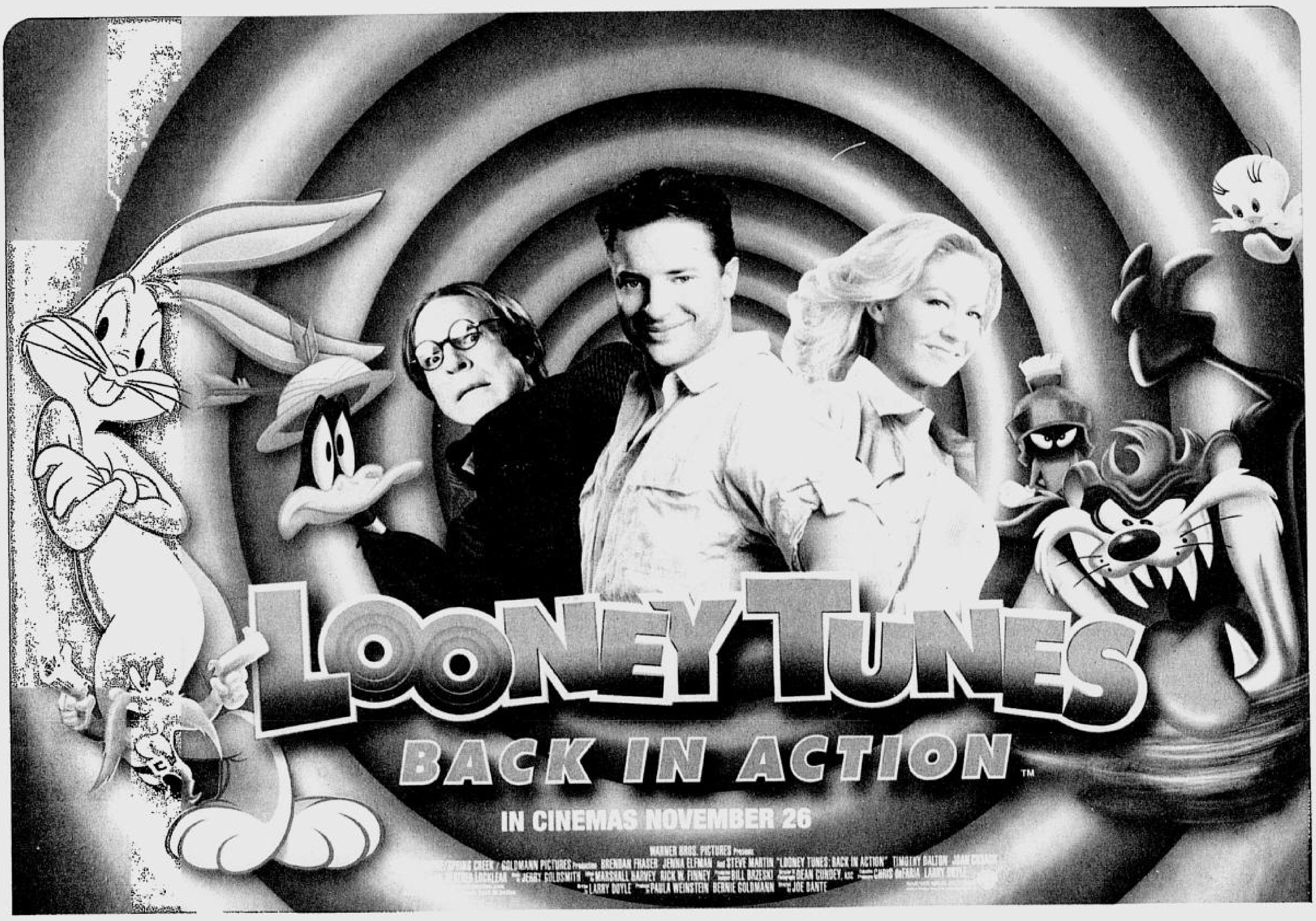
"He said she was already too old, and her body might not be able to stand the chemo," Richard said.

"She has been suffering so much pain the last few months, and you couldn't really do anything about it but stay with her."

Richard was with *Lola* Lydia last Monday night after his fencing competition.

"I went home to rest because I was tired after the competition," he recounted. "When I

GOMA'S/ A30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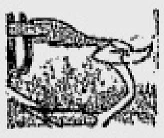
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TONES

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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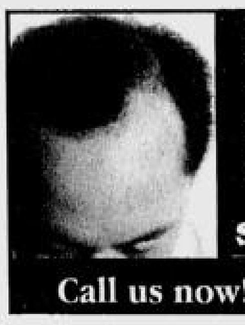
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Peso recovers to 55.49 to $1; BSP allays investors' fears

Customs' Nov. collection exceeds ₱8.84-B target

See story on page B4

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PESO yesterday rallied to 55.49 to $1, gaining three centavos from the previous day's close, as families of overseas Filipino workers took profit and exchanged their dollars into local currency.

Traders, however, said they were not convinced that the peso could sustain the rebound specially when fresh political issues come into play.

On a year-to-date basis, the peso had remained the worst-performing currency in the region after having shed about 3.5 percent of its value since the start of the year. Yesterday, it was the fourth top gainer even as the Japanese yen slid and the Thai baht was steady.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said exporters were satisfied with the current exchange rate. Exporters are now looking at a 2-percent growth in receipts for the year.

During a teleconference with Asian and European investors Monday afternoon, Buenaventura assured them that the foreign exchange rate remained market driven.

Corazon Guidote, executive director of the Investors' Relation Office, pointed out that foreign investors had discounted the political risks in the Philippines for as long as economic fundamentals were intact.

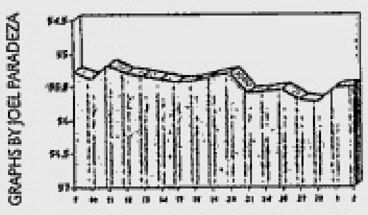
"Investors are happy with the economic numbers. We have a steady growth and low inflation. They are seeing some opportunities in the peso and bond markets," said Guidote, who was also present during the teleconference.

"The sellers came in at the right price. Supply and demand forces are working now. Panicky investors have calmed down," said the

PESO/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY JOEL PARADEZA

DECEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.49 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 02, 2003

¥ 109.58 = $ 1

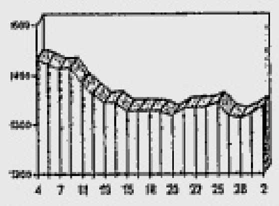
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 02, 2003

GOLD: $398.70-399

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 02, 2003

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Bargain-hunting lifts stocks

STOCKS closed higher for a second straight day yesterday, powered by bargain hunting in key blue chip stocks led by PLDT after it signed alliances with foreign carriers related to its international long distance service.

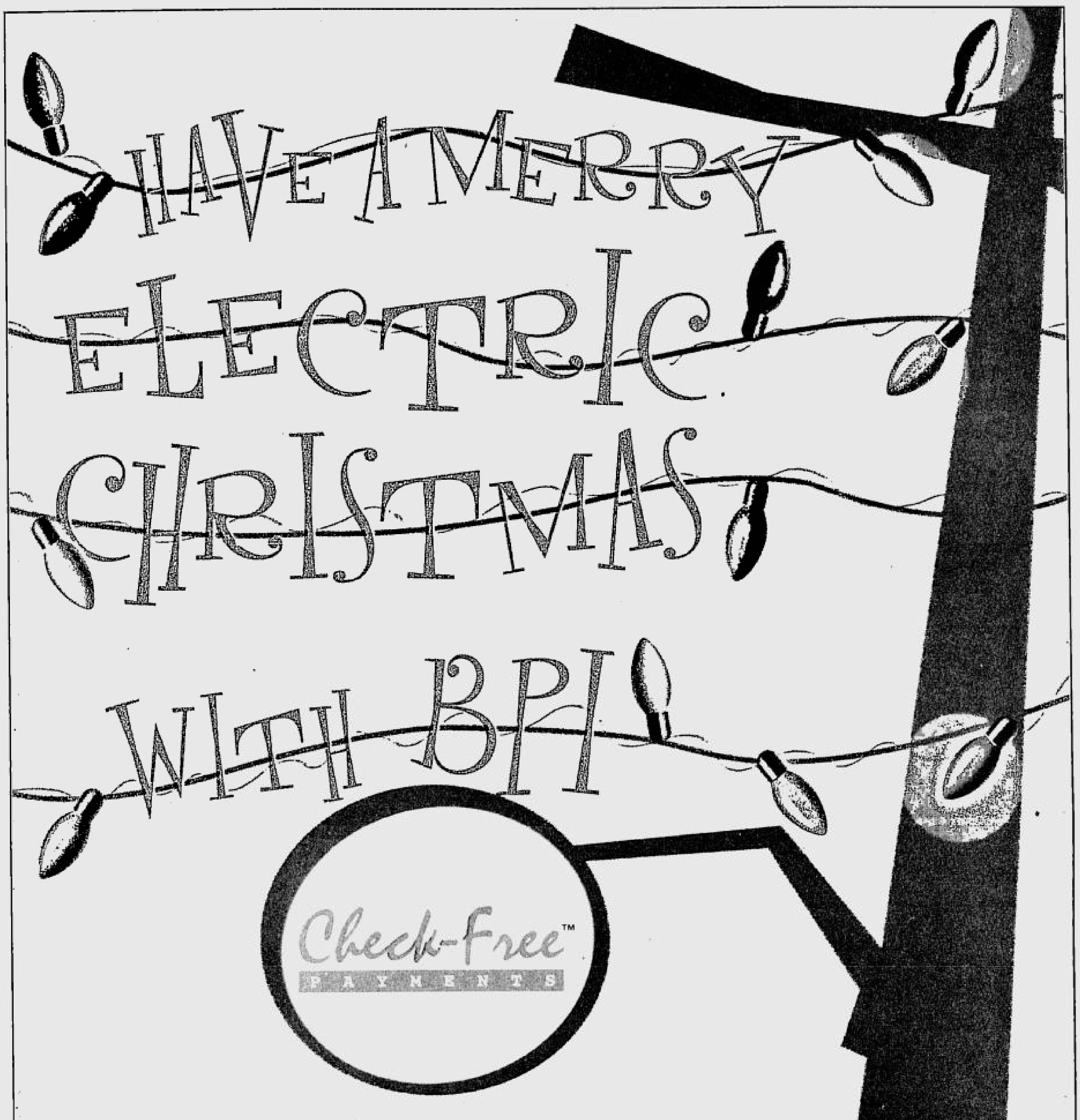
Traders said the peso's sustained recovery also fueled positive sentiment, with foreign investors going back to accumulate market heavyweights such as Ayala Land Inc .

The Philippine stock index climbed 15.57 points or 1.18 percent to end at 1,336.83 points, paring its gains from a day high of 1,341.86 points.

The index has climbed 31.27 percent so far this year.

"It's more bargain hunting because we

BARGAIN-HUNTING/ B3



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LOAN REFINANCING

Ayala to issue preferred shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA Corp. is set to issue up to P1.5 billion worth of redeemable preferred shares to refinance loans that will fall due next year.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Ayala said its board of directors has approved the issuance of redeemable preferred shares, which will mature in five years with a dividend rate based on five-year Mart 1.

MART 1 is the benchmark used by the Money Market Association of the Philippines in trading fixed income securities in the secondary market.

Ayala's preferred shares will be priced at P5 per share with a par value of P1 each.

The conglomerate said the issuance would not be convertible to common shares. These are also non-voting and without preemptive rights.

The shares are redeemable in full through a cash payment of 100 percent of issue price at the end of the fifth year from issue date.

Unlike a common stock, a preferred share trades like a bond ,and does not participate in the share price appreciation. Dividends are paid from after-tax money, making them a more expensive form of capitalization.

Upon liquidation, bond holders are prioritized over those holding preferred shares, which, in turn, have priority over common shares. These shares are also "preferred" with respect to payment of dividends.

Lepanto eyes resumption of copper operations

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co., one of the country's oldest mining firms, plans to resume its copper mining business, which was mothballed in 1997, to take advantage of improving copper prices in the global market.

"We want to revisit our copper mining but to do this, we have to do one more year of drilling," Lepanto chair Felipe Yap told reporters in an interview. "We need to spend about $4-$5 million for the redrilling."

He said the company still had about five million tons of copper reserves beside its existing gold minesite in Benguet province. He said the copper mine could be operated by Lepanto for five more years.

Yap said copper mining, which used to be the company's bread and butter, was becoming viable again due to improving prices. At the time the mining business was suspended, he said the average gold price was at $260 an ounce and copper was at only 65 to 70 US cents a pound.

"The economics has changed," he said, noting that gold price was now at $395 an ounce and copper at 80 cents a pound. *Doris C. Dumlao*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 2, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.75	20,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	2,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43	43	42.5	43	1,268,300
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	35	35	34	34	67,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57	410,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	26	26	540,200
Philippine National Bank	24.25	24.25	24.25	24.25	11,100
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.5	12.5	4,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1730	1740	1730	1740	710
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	523,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1345	1355	1345	1355	3,560
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	3,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.66	0.67	0.66	0.67	200,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	730	740	730	740	114,040
Ipeople Inc.	1	1	1	1	11,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.0525	0.042	0.042	24,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.038	0.036	0.037	900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.83	0.85	0.83	0.83	4,100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	780	810	780	805	166,810
Ivantage Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	1,500,000
Vivant Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	10,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15.25	14.75	15	1,122,500
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	23.5	23.25	23.5	3,713,000
Petron Corp.	2.2	2.22	2.2	2.22	6,331,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	10,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	50,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	313,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	50,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	30,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17	17	17	2,030,400
San Miguel Corp. A	53.5	54.5	53.5	54.5	64,700
San Miguel Corp. B	61	61.5	60.5	60.5	96,300
Universal Robina Corp.	5.4	5.9	5.3	5.9	185,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	310,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	40,000
Ayala Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.9	4.9	3,713,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49	3,170,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.2	0.205	610,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	450,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	19	455,200
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
Ionics Inc.	1.48	1.52	1.48	1.52	110,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.04	1,045,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	7,980,000
Music Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	170,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.13	0.13	110,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	250,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Chemical Ind. Of The Phil	35	35	35	35	100,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.055	1,600,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	20	20	20	20	476,900
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.59	0.55	0.59	1,580,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.8	301,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	26.5	26.5	26	26.5	815,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10.25	10.25	10	10	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	11	11	10.25	10.25	19,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	11	11	11	11	20,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.6	5.3	5.5	24,257,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	590,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.13	0.13	310,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	1,470,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.06	931,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	20,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.8	0.8	100,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	620,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	6,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.3	3,245,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.23	3,190,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	6,350,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	130,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	690,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	1,200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0034	0.0032	0.0034	6,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	1,500,000

Peso recovers to 55.49 . . .

From page B1

central bank chief who stressed that the BSP had not intervened in the market.

He said the BSP neither sold nor bought dollars yesterday. Turnover stood at $166 million, slightly higher than the $156 million the previous day.

Buenaventura stressed that the central bank did not see any speculative activity in the foreign exchange market that usually accompanied the local currency's tailspin in the past.

"The exchange rate in the gray or black market is not far off from the spot market rate," said the BSP chief.

DISCLOSURES

GEMMA Santos resigned as corporate secretary of MacroAsia Corp.

* * *

JOSE Gablonza resigned as internal auditor of SM Development Corp. Christopher Bautista was appointed to replace him.

* * *

SALCON Power Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Jan. 14, 10 a.m. at Manila Polo Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Nov. 30 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 127,000 of its own shares at P1.32 per share.

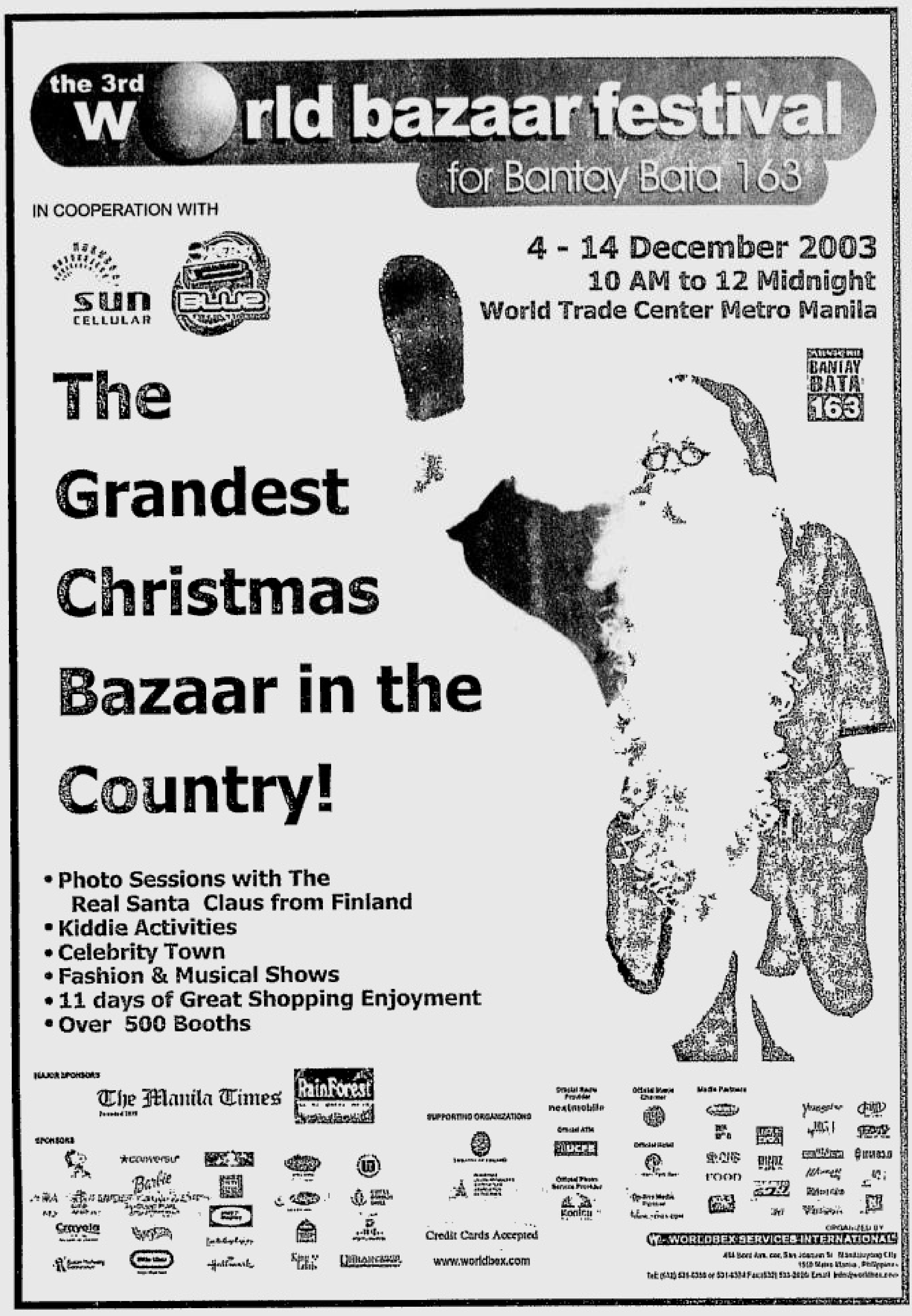
* * *

AYALA Corp. declared a cash dividend of P0.03 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of Dec. 19 and will be payable on Jan. 21. The company issued redeemable preferred shares with a par value of P1 per share to fund the company's maturing obligations in 2004. Also, the company scheduled its 2004 annual stockholders' meeting on March 26 after amending its by-laws moving its annual stockholders' meeting from April to March.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

December 2, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.835422	1.000000	55.585000
Japan	Yen	0.007639	0.009144	0.508300
United Kingdom	Pound	1.435923	1.718800	95.539500
Hongkong	Dollar	0.107586	0.128781	7.158300
Switzerland	Franc	0.643573	0.770357	42.820300
Canada	Dollar	0.640857	0.767106	42.639600
Singapore	Dollar	0.485146	0.580720	32.279300
Australia	Dollar	0.606785	0.726322	40.372600
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.216091	2.652661	147.448200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.222774	0.266660	14.822300
Brunei	Dollar	0.483742	0.579039	32.185900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000099	0.000118	0.006600
Thailand	Baht	0.020943	0.025069	1.393500
UAE	Dirham	0.227468	0.272279	15.134600
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.197000	66.535200
Argentina	Peso	0.279405	0.334448	18.590300
Brazil	Real	0.285907	0.342231	19.022900
Denmark	Kroner	0.134334	0.160798	8.938000
India	Rupee	0.018285	0.021887	1.216600
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219877	0.263193	14.629600
Mexico	New Peso	0.073476	0.087951	4.888800
New Zealand	Dollar	0.537353	0.643211	35.752900
Norway	Kroner	0.122390	0.146501	8.143300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014839	0.017762	0.987300
South Africa	Rand	0.131322	0.157193	8.737600
Korea	Won	0.000697	0.000834	0.046400
Sweden	Kroner	0.110925	0.132777	7.380400
Syria	Pound	0.016221	0.019417	1.079300
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024536	0.029369	1.632500
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000524	0.000627	0.034900



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COME & VISIT

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

December 02, 2003, Tuesday
Focus on SME's

AM Programme
9.00 - 9:30 Opening Ceremonies/Invocation/ National Anthem
9:30 - 10:00 Keynote Address - by Atty. Raul S. Rogo
10:00 - 10:30 The National SME Agenda - by Under Sec. Gregory L. Domingo, DTI
10:30 - 11:00 The Philippine Model for Digitizing SMEs - by Ma. Merle Yaptenco, Pres & CEO, Fix Systems, Inc. & Former UN Consultant
11:00 - 11:15 --- Tea Break---
11:15 -11:45 Starting Your E-Business: Basic Steps - by William Cabalin, Corporate Sales Manager, Pacific Internet
11:45 -12.15 Open Forum
12:15 -1:30pm --- Lunch Break---

PM Programme
1:30 - 2:00 Financing Your E Business - by Melvin E. Abanto, VP, Small Business Guarantee & Finance Corp. (SBGFC)
2:00 - 2:30 Essential IP Issues for SMEs - by Atty. Gwen Grecia de Vera, PJS Law
2:30 - 3:00 Online Advertising in a Post Dotcom World - by Ramon D. Lizardo,VP INQ7.net
3:00 - 3:15 --- Tea Break ---
3:15 - 3:45 Case Studies of SME Doing E Business Case Number 1
3:45 - 4:15 Case Number 2
4:15 - 4:30 Open Forum
4:30 - 5:00 Business Consultation

December 03, 2003, Wednesday
Focus on Electronic Payment and Solutions

AM Programme
9.00 - 9.30 Registration
9:30 -10:15 Electronic payment as a major challenge in the success of e-Business - by Emmanuel Herbosa, Vice President,BPI
10:15 -11:00 Online Payment Solutions - by Eric J. Severino, Director, Sales & Marketing, BancNet
11:00 -11:30 --- Tea Break ---
11:30 -12:15 Online Payment Solutions - by Gregorio C. Severino, Assistant VP, Equitable PCI Bank
12:15 -12:45 Panel Reaction/Open Forum

--- Lunch Break --- (working lunch/to be served)

PM Programme
1:00 - 1:30 Official Address of Secretary Mar Roxas Secretary, Department of Trade & Industry (DTI)
1:45 - 2:30 Protec[illegible] Beyond Firewalls - by Yancy Pro[illegible] Technical Consultant Computer Associates (CA)
2:30 - 3:15 Wireless Financial Transactions - by Manuel Acuna, IT Director, Lhuillier Group of Companies
3:15 - 3:45 --- Tea Break ---
3:45 - 4:15 Wireless Payment - what's the uptake? - by Rod S. Babasa, Sr Mngr, Bus. Dev. Smart Communications, Inc.
4:15 - 4:30 Open Forum
4:30 - 5:00 Business Consultation

December 04, 2003, Thursday
Focus on Convergent Technologies

AM Programme
9:00 - 9:30 Registration
9:30 - 10:00 Convergent technologies making it affordable for SMEs to do e-business - by Arthur Tan, President, Integrated Microelectronics Inc.[IMI]
10:00-10:30 Making Wi-Fi Technology accessible to SMEs by Edmund R. Pike, Product Development Manager PLDT
10:30-10:45 -- Tea Break
10:45-11:15 Mobility and Wireless solutions for the SMEs via portable & handheld computing devices - by Paolo C. Lopez, Head-Bus.Dev. Globe Solutions
11:15-11:45 Hewlett Packard Philippines Inc. Presentation - by Jermyn 'Wowie' L. Wong, Market Development Manager, Personal Systems Group,HP Philippines Inc.
11:45-12:15 Panel Reaction/Open Forum
12:15-1:30 --- Lunch Break ---

PM Programme
1:30 - 2:00 Transforming the Internet Cafe into shared access and business solutions center - by Raymond Ricafort, Pres., Digital Paradise Inc.
2:00 - 2:30 Making inventory management more efficient through automation - by Antonio S. Darjuan Jr., PLDT
2:30 - 3:00 --- Tea Break ---
3:00 - 3:30 Sales automation using wireless & mobile technologies - by Christopher H. Chong, Head-Technical & Wireless Applications, Globe Solutions
3:30 - 4:00 Open Forum
4:00 - 5:00 Business Consultation

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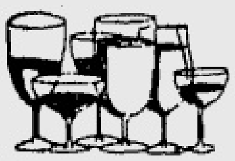

Victor C. Agustin

COCOBANK is looking more and more like Solidbank, at the rate ex-Solidbankers are filling up key positions within the sequestered bank.

With the appointment of former Solidbank president Deogracjas Vistan as Cocobank chair and his investment banking head Jose Querubin as Cocobank president/CEO, naturally the talent pool that Vistan and Querubin would fish from would be their former backyard, especially since their very own Solidbank had been swallowed by Metrobank.

Among the senior ex-Solidbankers who have found a new home in Cocobank include chief credit officer Higino Macadaeg, consumer banking group chief Herminio Famatigan Jr., and incoming HRD head Diwi Castanos.

It also helps that the new Cocobank management has unwittingly created a number of vacancies after it offered a premium for early retirement package.

Out of the 3,800 employees, about 500 have already availed themselves of the package, enticed by the 2 1/4-months-for-every-year-of-service sweetener. (The normal retirement package was 1 3/4 months for every year of service.) It is not immediately clear how many out of the retirees are officers.

We understand that Vistan and Querubin plan to cut down the present plantilla by 30 percent, 15 percent by yearend and another 15 by next year.

According to the grapevine, what has also been prompting a number of the middle-ranking and senior officers to make up their minds to leave is chief operating officer Antonio Martin Cailao.

A Citibank alumnus like Vistan and Querubin, Cailao has been bawling out officers that a number of the long-timers have the impression that they are either in a Marine boot camp or, worse, working for a daily newspaper.

One who was at the receiving end of the Cailao temper even collapsed during a recent office party at Le Pavillon and had to be rushed off to a hospital, according to the grapevine.

But, then again, given the work culture in government agencies, somebody just has got to start, how shall we say it, cracking coconuts.

Killer advisory

BAD news for the child of the Sixties. Gary Lewis, of the Gary Lewis and the Playboys fame, cancelled a weekend concert slated at Glorietta's Hard Rock Café because of a security advisory.

No, no, it has nothing to do with his ex-Filipina wife Jinky Suzara, but a US State Department warning that painted Manila in the same unflattering light as Istanbul and Baghdad.

Given the Lewis cancellation, Hard Rock scrambled to get the Hotdogs to team up with RJ and his Friends and advance the show for this Friday.

Rocking to higher sales

AND speaking of rock icons, Music One has quickly run out of stock of Rod Stewart's just released Volume II of "The Great American Songbook" album. A sister company of the National Book Store, Music One is rushing a new shipment hopefully to catch the holiday spending surge.

To those who could not wait, there are a few copies of the Stewart CD still available at the competing Odyssey chain.

Like Volume 1, the 14-song sequel locally retails for P450 (a little over $8), as against the $13-$14 range it goes for in US music stores.

Heard through the grapevine

PHILIPPINE News, the Bay Area weekly now controlled by Ambassador to London Edgardo Espiritu, is on the block.

The weaker US economy, collection problems, plus the loss of 2nd class mailing privilege of ethnic newspapers are now threatening the viability of what used to be the opposition voice for Fil-Americans during the martial law years.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Bargain-hunting

From page B1

started approaching support levels last week," said Monique Lecaros, dealer at SB Equities Inc.

"At some point you should expect harvesting of gains," she said, adding the resistance level in the index was at around the 1,350 to 1,380 level. *Reuters*

Japan firms still keen on investing in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

JAPANESE firms remain keen on investing in the Philippines despite the uncertain political environment, with more investors expressing interest in establishing bases of operations here.

Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro) executive director Toshio Asakura said in a briefing yesterday that Japanese firms continued to have confidence in the country despite uncertainties brought by the coming elections and politics, in general.

"They are still coming here as planned. Of course, nobody wants turmoil, but Japanese companies are still coming here. They remain confident in the Philippines," he said.

He said the government's effort to retain investor confidence was one of the main considerations of Japanese firms in deciding to locate some of their operations here.

Among these efforts, he said, included agreements between the Philippine National Police and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry concerning measures to prevent hijacking and truck-jacking, as well as between the Department of Labor and Employment and the Japan Chamber regarding labor issues.

"These efforts convince Japanese investors that the government is making this land good for Japanese investors," Asakura said.

Proof of the confidence of Japanese firms in the Philippines is the P100-million initial investment of auto-part manufacturer Fuji Elastomers Manila Corp. on a 2,400-sq.m. manufacturing plant at the First Philippine Industrial Park in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

The plant, according to Japan-based Fuji Industries Corp. general affairs department manager Yoshiyuki Nakano, will be producing 58 million pieces of injector o-rings, a vehicle component that prevents fuel leakage, in 2004. By 2005, the plant's capacity would be raised to more than 100 million pieces of injector o-rings, he said.

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Customs' Nov. collection exceeds ₱8.84-B target

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Customs said it had collected almost P9 billion in tariffs and duties in November, higher by 1.6 percent than the P8.84-billion goal, bolstering expectations that the government's deficit target of P18 billion during the month was met.

Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo yesterday reported that the bureau had raised P96.44 billion in the first 11 months, or P4.5 billion more than the 11-month goal of P91.93 billion.

"With the November collection, we are now confident that we will exceed this year's target of P100.56 billion," said the customs chief in an interview.

Against a year ago, last month's collection was higher by P773 million or 9.4 percent while the 11-month data was up by P10.408 billion or 12.1 percent more.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said that the BIR had been struggling to meet the P41-billion November target and that an agreement with banks on the voluntary payment of back gross receipts taxes could help the bureau achieve the goal.

"I think we will be within target in November. We will not veer away from fiscal discipline. We are committed to work to raise revenue through improved administration," said Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong, officer-in-charge of the Department of Finance.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said there were still some problems with constructive cash but any spike in spending should have been offset by tighter disbursements.

"With only a month to go, I think we will be meeting the P202-billion deficit target for the year," added Boncodin.

The government must limit its spending to about P72 billion in November and P61 billion this month to meet the deficit targets of P18 billion and P11.22 billion in those months. In the third quarter, expenditure exceeded the ceiling by P19 billion.

As of October, the gap between revenue and expenditure stood at P163.88 billion or P8 billion lower than the ceiling of P171.88 billion for the 10-month period.

Gov't urged to seek patent for smoked tuna technology

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Local exporters here have urged the government to help solve the patent issue involving the technology used in producing high-value smoked tuna product here.

Andrew Partridge, member of local chapter of the Philippine Exporters Confederation (PhilExport) here, said the government should do something now.

Partridge said lobbying for the granting of smoked tuna patent in favor of the local processors would be a difficult task but the government must do something to protect the interest of local exporters.

The patent row issue will be one of the issues to be tackled during the one-day 2nd Exporters Congress slated today.

PhilExport is contesting the pending patent application both in the US and in the country by an American businessman.

A 12-cents-to-a-pound tax is being imposed by the US on smoked filtered tuna exports from here.

The technology was invented by a Japanese businessman here in 1985, but an American businessman has applied a patent for it.

This technology preserves the color and freshness of tuna meat without the smoke flavor, the reason why it is now gaining wide acceptance in the US market.

The city shipped out last year about 1.2 million metric tons of smoked filtered tuna to the US valued at about $2.3 million.

The city, which is dubbed the "Tuna Capital" of the country, exported $333 million worth of tuna products to the US, Japan and Europe last year.

Of the total export volume, 48 percent went to the United States, considered as the biggest market for Philippine tuna; 35 percent went to Europe and 8 percent went to Japan.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Labor wants unilateral tariff cuts junked

SIXTEEN of the country's biggest labor organizations and federations called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to pursue programs that would provide safeguards to local industries and protect jobs in view of the onslaught of globalization.

The workers specifically asked the President to stop the accelerated and unilateral tariff reduction program, which they blamed for the closure of many domestic industries and the loss of jobs to thousands of workers.

"In these difficult times, the urgent need is job security. We have already lost hundreds of thousands of jobs due to the influx of imports. We cannot afford to lose more. The tide must be stemmed and the only way to do it is to address the root cause of the import surge which is the premature and accelerated reduction of tariffs on imports," said Ernesto Arellano, president of the National Federation of Labor.

In a letter sent to the President, the workers thanked the President for her pronouncement two years ago that her administration is "not wedded to unbridled globalization." But they expressed apprehension that her position and directives have been disregarded and subverted by government officials "who seem so enamored to unbridled liberalization."

They cited the clashing positions of agencies like the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Tariff Commission (TC) on one side, which are pushing for accelerated tariff cuts, and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) on the other side.

The workers cited the issuance of Executive Order 241, but said the tariff adjustments on finished products had been insignificant to make an impact even as a temporary relief. "The tariff rates were just frozen but not adjusted upwards to the (WTO) bound rates or if unbound, to 1994 levels," they said.

The workers asked for the immediate scrapping of the unilateral Tariff Reform Program and the amendment of EO 334 grating the petitions of local industries and farmers to increase the tariffs on their goods while reverting tariff rates on all other locally produced or substitutable products to bound rates or, if unbound, to 1994 levels.

Labor also called for the establishment of a comprehensive national industrialization and agriculture development program that calibrates the country's entry into the globalized trading environment. Workers also called for the strengthening and strict implementation of all safety nets such as the safeguard law, anti-dumping and countervailing duties, and combating smuggling and other unfair trade practices. They also called for appointing of labor representatives in all trade and tariff policy agencies.

RP urges Opec to maintain output level

THE PHILIPPINES, which imports all of its crude oil requirements, has urged the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) yesterday to maintain the group's production ceiling when its ministers meet this week.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said world oil prices could rise if Opec members cut production below the current ceiling of 24.5 million barrels per day (bpd).

"Any downward adjustment in world oil production will seriously exert pressure in an already volatile market," Perez said.

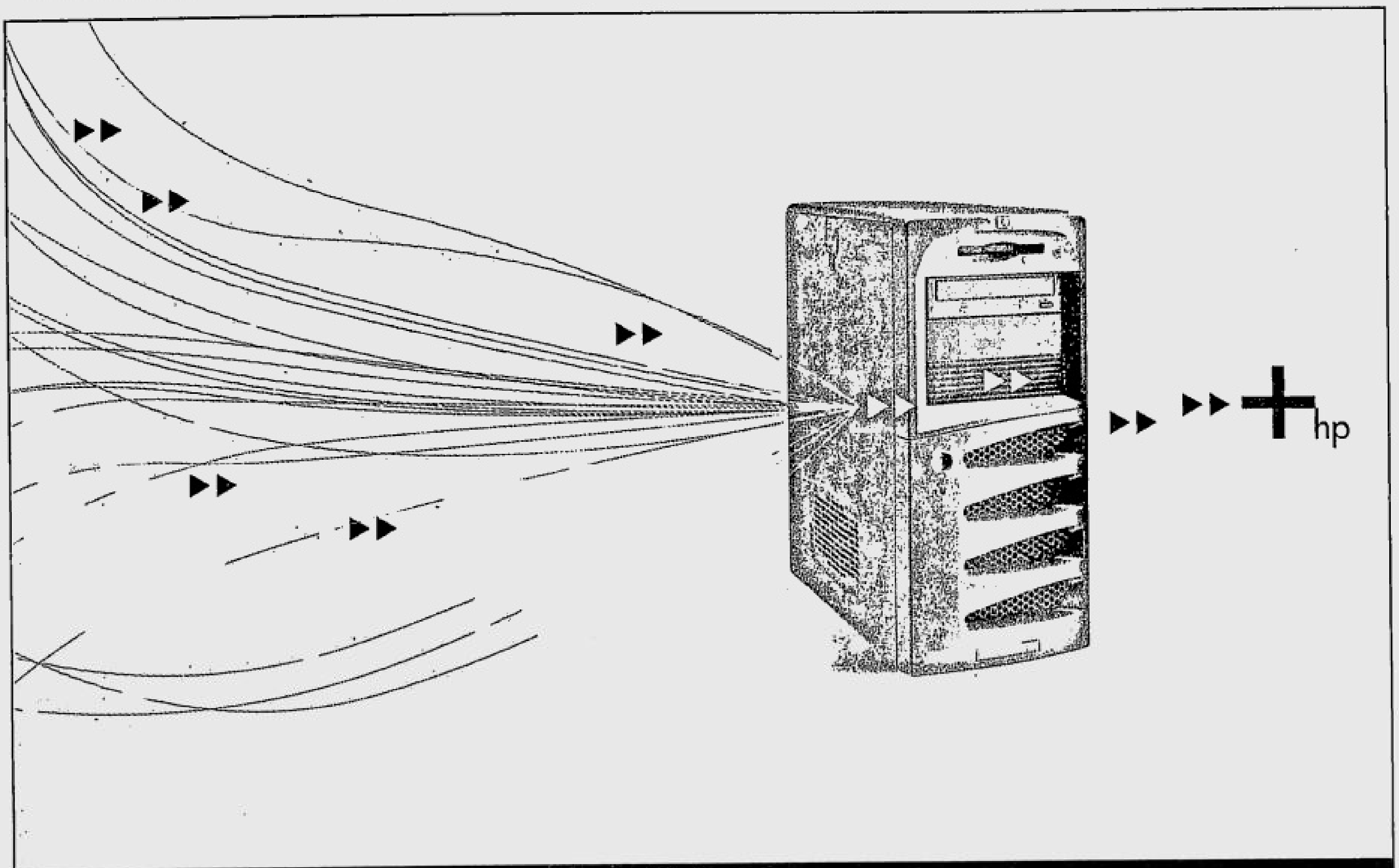
He said oil prices had risen in the last three months after Opec decided to reduce production at its September meeting.

"Any further (cuts in production) will imperil the sustained growth of the world economies, particularly those of oil-importing countries, such as the Philippines," he said.

Opec oil ministers are expected to meet Thursday in Vienna to lay out its strategy for next year.

The Philippine government is concerned about the possible inflationary effect of rising prices of refined oil products.

The Philippines imports about 269,000 bpd of crude oil and 94,000 bpd of finished petroleum products. **AFP**



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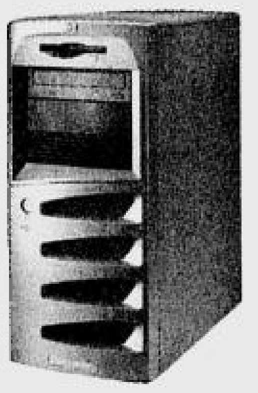

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GTEB endorses use of new technology

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GARMENTS and Textile Export Board has endorsed the adoption of a new technology called the General Sewing Data system that could enhance manufacturing operations and improve productivity.

The GTEB, an attached agency of the Department of Trade and Industry which is tasked to promote the business of local garments firms and oversee their operations, said the GSD system would enable the garments manufacturers to know in advance how long it would take to manufacture a certain volume of orders and the corresponding cost of production.

"We are endorsing GSD among local garment firms to improve productivity, reduce manufacturing cost and provide better income for the industry," said Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II in a statement.

Roxas said the GTEB was scheduled to meet with the Bureau of Working Conditions (BWC) of the Department of Labor and Employment to discuss the implementation of the technology by the garments firms.

The GSD system, which is owned by the British firm General Sewing Data Ltd., is already being used in 51 countries, including the United States, China, France, Canada, Spain, Germany, India, South Africa and Jordan.

The GTEB said the introduction of the GSD technology was part of the government's efforts to help prepare the local garments industry for the quota-free regime beginning 2005.

Philip Morris says tobacco farmers can survive free trade

STO. TOMAS, Batangas—Philip Morris Phils. Mfg. Inc. (PMPMI), a subsidiary of one of the world's largest cigarette makers, said recently that tobacco growers in Northern Luzon could withstand the ill effects of globalization in international trade.

PMPMI managing director Chris Nelson said Filipino tobacco farmers should not be worried about a liberalized world market as they have the capability and resources to compete with other tobacco-producing countries.

Nelson, however, stressed that farmers should maintain the good quality of their produce and keep competitive prices to survive the stiffer competition in the global market.

"The farmers should not be afraid of globalization. As long as their harvest meets the quality and price requirements set by the industry, they will always have a market for their produce," Nelson said.

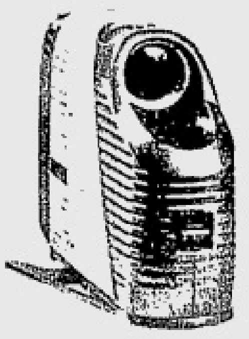
He said that burley tobacco from Isabela, the country's top burley tobacco-producing province, has the edge in terms of quality and cost over those produced in developing nations.

He noted that Lancaster Philippines Inc., one of PMPMI's leaf buyers, helped tobacco farmers export Isabela burley leaf to several manufacturing plants of PMPMI in US, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Malaysia and Australia.

This accounted for some 600 metric tons of Burley tobacco worth over P95 million.

Nelson likewise promised to increase purchases of local tobacco as PMPMI intends to increase its market share in the country.

"With our new investment and plans for growth, we would definitely buy more homegrown tobacco as long as the quality is good and are competitively-priced," he said. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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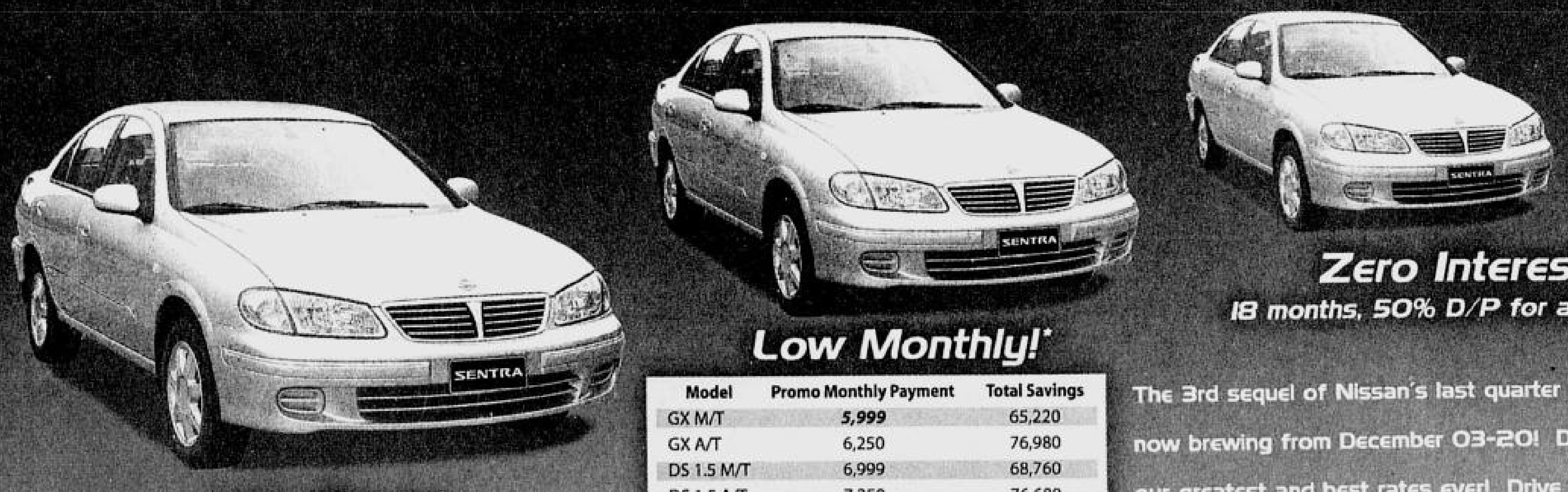

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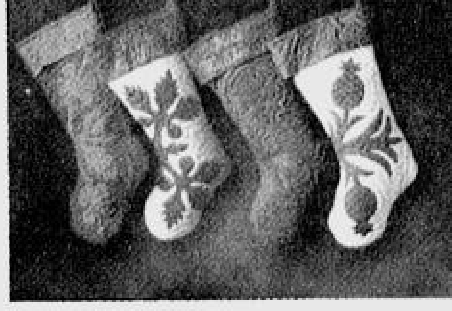

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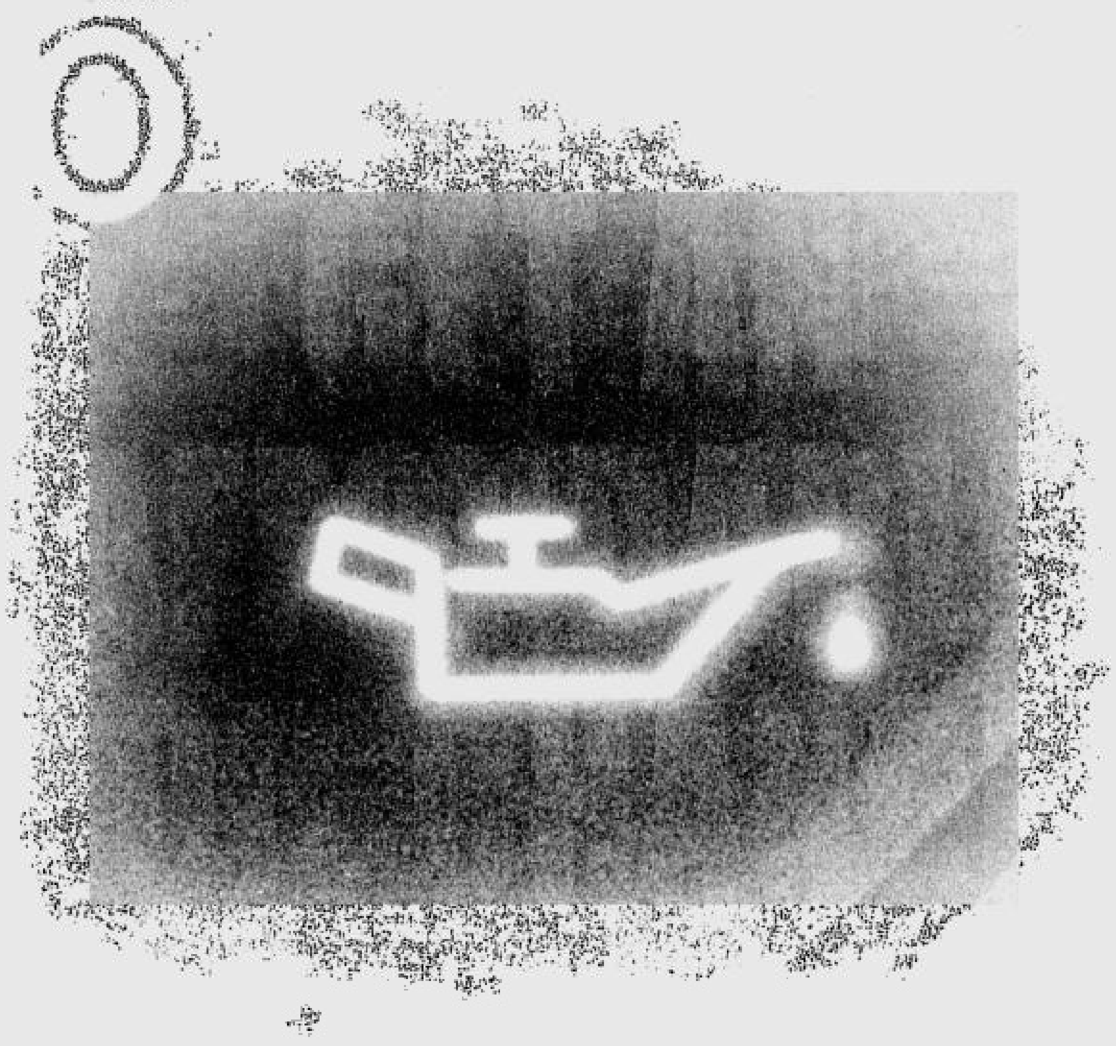

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US factory growth fastest in 20 years

NEW YORK—US factory activity rocketed to its fastest pace since 1983 in November and construction spending hit another record high the prior month, according to reports on Monday showing the economy's rapid growth is starting to turn the tide of three years of job losses.

The Institute for Supply Management said its manufacturing index jumped to 62.8 in November, the highest since December 1983, from 57 in October. That easily beat the forecasts of Wall Street economists.

With growth so strong and new orders flooding in, factories hired workers for the first time in 37 months, according to the survey. The ISM figures also suggested little slowdown ahead, with factory owners struggling to meet demand for goods.

That good news means government data to be released on Friday could show an even bigger rise in November payrolls than the 135,000 gain forecast by economists, after an increase of 126,000 in October.

The stunning ISM figures gave a lift to stocks, helping push up the S&P 500 and Dow Jones industrial average to 18-month highs. The dollar, however, failed to capitalize on the data and remained close to record lows against the euro.

Treasuries prices suffered on expectations that such robust growth and renewed hiring would bring closer the day the Federal Reserve begins to lift benchmark short-term interest rates, now at a 45-year low of one percent.

The yield on the two-year note the most sensitive to Fed policy, hit its highest level in a year before recovering late.

Still, Fed officials have emphasized in recent weeks that strong growth is needed for at least a few quarters to soak up excess production and labor capacity.

Not only has the hard-hit manufacturing sector rebounded strongly, but two of the mainstays of the economy during its sluggish recovery the past two years, housing and construction, also remain robust.

Construction spending in October posted its fourth straight record level, surging 0.9 percent and also easily beating forecasts.

Overall construction spending rose to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of $922.0 billion in the month from an upwardly revised $913.5 billion in September, the Commerce Department said.

Analysts polled by Reuters had expected a 0.6 percent rise. Private residential construction spending rose 2.2 percent to a record $484.1 billion from $473.6 billion.

That suggests the economy's third-quarter 8.2 percent growth rate, also the fastest in two decades, may not slow as much as economists had originally thought.

While strong consumer spending is expected to ease as support from tax cuts fades, other areas like manufacturing will now likely pick up the slack.

"Now it's time not just for pulling weeds but to plant a new garden. A much greater degree of confidence is very much a factor here," said Norbert Ore, who heads the manufacturing survey for ISM. *Reuters*

Global manufacturing sector recovering, JP Morgan says

LONDON—A global indicator based on national polls of manufacturers has reached its highest reading since April 2000, showing broad recovery in the sector and employment stabilizing after years of job cuts, JPMorgan said.

The indicator, produced by JPMorgan with research and supply management organizations, rose to 56.8 in November from 54.5 in October, rising further above the 50 line that marked a return to growth. The new orders index surged to 63.0 from 59.1.

"The global PMI signals a broad, robust recovery in the manufacturing sector," said David Hensley, director of global economics coordination at JPMorgan.

The global indicator, based on national purchasing managers' indices, combines data collected from some 7,000 executives in around 20 countries including the United States, Japan, Germany, France and Britain.

"Survey details show that booming growth in output and orders is spurring firms to boost hiring and replenish inventories," Hensley said.

"The latest data are consistent with annualized growth of global industrial production of over eight percent."

Critically, the employment index rose to 49.9, showing manufacturers overall are now creating almost as many jobs as they cut.

Job creation plays a key role in encouraging consumers to fuel economic growth through their spending.

British manufacturing expanded at its fastest pace in almost four years, driven by the strongest export orders since that series began eight years ago.

In Japan, the Reuters manufacturing index gave its strongest readings since that poll was launched in October 2001, with export orders growing faster despite the strength of the yen against the dollar.

In the euro zone, whose currency is under even greater upward pressure from dollar weakness, business is expanding at its fastest pace since February 2001, although manufacturers remain nervous about taking on more workers. *AP*

China targets 7% growth for '04

BEIJING— China's economic planners have suggested they are getting ready to step on the brakes with a seven percent growth target for next year, state media said Tuesday.

The growth objective was made public at a high-level meeting beginning Monday which set out the strategic goals for economic policies in 2004, the People's Daily and other newspapers reported.

"The main work objective for the economy is to maintain fast, coordinated and healthy development," Premier Wen Jiabao was quoted as telling the National Development and Reform Commission during the meeting.

The operative word is "coordinated," a People's Daily editorial writer explained to the readers of the Communist Party mouthpiece, suggesting that China is no longer looking for growth at any cost.

China has routinely set a 7 percent growth target for the past half-decade, arguing it is the minimum needed if enough jobs are to be found for the unemployed and large-scale social unrest is to be avoided.

However, with average growth of 7.7 percent in the past five years and 8.5 percent predicted for this year, there is little doubt the target could have been set higher, ranking officials said.

"Economic development is not everything for the government," said Ma Kai, the head of the National Development and Reform Commission.

"We should pour more energy into other indicators such as education, health, environment and social welfare," he said.

The 7-percent growth is a target, and is different from forecasts for next year's economic growth, such as an 8.4 percent prediction made by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development last week.

That means it will serve as a guideline for Chinese officials as they plan policies for the next year, and sends an important signal that Beijing considers the time right for a measured slow-down.

It appears that China will mainly bring about less hectic economic growth by curbing investment in fixed assets. *AFP*

Bush to lift steel tariffs

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush may be following the course of least political resistance by lifting the steel tariffs he imposed in March 2002.

The duties on imported steel probably seemed like a good idea at the time. They enabled Bush, with an eye toward reelection in 2004, to extend a helping hand to a beleaguered major US industry.

Since then, however, the tariffs have turned into a huge policy headache for him both at home and abroad.

By ending the tariffs, as is widely expected, Bush risks angering steel makers and their workers in vital electoral states including Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and West Virginia.

But analysts suggest leaving them in place could risk even more by sparking a global trade war and unleashing punitive duties against a range of American goods from yet another set of battleground states.

Such a trade war could threaten the fledgling US economic recovery and squelch the recent stock market rally.

Among the American products targeted by the European Union, Japan and others if the steel tariffs should stay: orange juice from Florida, nuts from California, apparel from North and South Carolina, rice from Arkansas and apples from the Pacific Northwest.

The tariffs also are hurting steel-using manufacturers, including the auto industry, and their consumers. That's important in auto-making Michigan, another expected 2004 battleground, where Bush went on Monday.

Internationally, the tariffs have become a source of friction with countries like Britain, Italy, Spain and Japan that are supporting the United States in Iraq. They've also tarnished Bush's credentials as a free trader.

The World Trade Organization ruled last month that the tariffs are illegal. Bush has until Dec. 10 to act or risk retaliatory tariffs beginning Dec. 15. *AP*

AMA celebrates Foundation Day with tuition slash

AT A time when education comes at a high price, AMA Educational System extends a helping hand to poor but deserving students who would welcome the opportunity for world-class instruction.

AMA Education System, the premier information technology-based education institution in Asia, is giving away 23 percent discounts on all fees in celebration of its 23rd Foundation Day.

The big discount is being extended to transferees who will enroll for the 3rd trimester of SY 2003-2004 and new students (freshmen and transferees) for SY 2004-2005. The discount would be granted by the school on whatever fees paid, regardless of the amount paid, on or before Dec. 31 only. However, should the student decide to withdraw within the trimester, the discount will automatically be forfeited.

In addition, the AMA Foundation is also holding free qualifying exams for scholarships and grants for SY 2004-2005 beginning Nov. 15, and every Saturday thereafter until Dec. 20 for its various institutions.

Requirements include a photocopy of the high school report card (for freshmen), photocopy of summary of units earned or class cards (for trsnaferees), and a photocopy of parents/guardians 2002 ITR (for Amas and STFP).

As among Asia's pioneer and largest information technology-based learning institutions, Amaes is at the forefront in the delivery of cutting-edge and quality academic programs. Through the years, AMA has invested billions of pesos to provide the best and latest IT resources to its students.

On tap are P400 million worth of student assistance programs envisioned to alleviate the load for economically challenged but qualified high school students who may use this opportunity as a springboard to an international career.

Interested parties can call 373-3901 local 8214, or see the student affairs director or student relations manager of any Amaes member institution branch.

ALA-Philippines at Singapore confab

THE ASEAN Law Association (ALA), which counts Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam as member nations, recently concluded its 8th General Assembly in Singapore from Nov. 29 to Dec. 2.

CRUZ

The Philippines was represented by a strong 44-man Philippine delegation headed by lawyer Avelino V. Cruz and lawyer Alonzo Ancheta, the chair and vice chair, respectively, of the ALA-Philippine Chapter.

The ALA, the accredited non-governmental organization under the Asean treaty, is unique in its broad range of membership from the legal professions of the Asean region. This includes Supreme Court Justices, Judges, Ministers of Justice, prosecutors, Attorney General, deans and professors in the academe, presidents of Bar societies and leaders of Bar associations, prominent legal practitioners, all active members of the respective national committees of each country.

In the Philippines, no less than the Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide and Associate Justices Bellosillo, Artemio Panganiban, Leonardo Quisumbing and Antonio Carpio sit in the ALA-Philippine national committee.

The ALA General Assembly's focus is Asean-oriented and its workshops deal particularly with cross-border applications of laws in the different Asean countries.

During the Singapore ALA General Assembly and workshop, Justice Leonardo Quisumbing, UP law dean Raul Pangalangan, professor Harry L. Roque, dean Eduardo delos Angeles, lawyers Francis Lim, Ivan J. Uy and Ma. Lourdes A. Seren presented their legal papers.

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TOYOTA SPONSORS AIM ALUMNI CELEBRATION

AIM Alumni Association's 'I'll be Home for Christmas' reunion is slated on Dec. 5, 7 p.m. at the Zen Garden of AIM in Greenbelt, Makati City. Shown at the sponsorship signing are (seated from left) Teddy Villanueva, MBM '73, treasurer, AIM Alumni, Art Macapagal, MBM 71 and president of Toyota Pasong Tamo and Ed Banaga, MBM '79 and chair, AIM Alumni. Standing are Daio Candelaria, general manager, Toyota Pasong Tamo and Danny Saracin, MBM '83, executive director of AIM Alumni. A Toyota Altis will be raffled during the Christmas reunion.

AVELINO'S 'MAGIC TOUCH'

Dr. Nelson P. Avelino, one of the speakers at the 17th Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Cutaneous Medicine, is shown demonstrating the proper use of Restylane at the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel recently. Restylane is one of the latest fillers in Europe and has also recently been approved by the Food and Drug Administration of the United States. It is a non-animal stabilized hyaluronic acid used to plump up lines like wrinkles and unwanted folds on the facial skin. It is also used to augment lips (reshape and poute) and uplift deep scars. Avelino successfully did lip augmentation, glabellar and naso-labial fold treatments at the convention. For further inquiries about Restylane, call Avelino at Via Dermatologica Clinic (636-4916) in Robinsons Galleria and Tomas Morato (375-1106) or at Chroma Medic Inc (817-8541).

Bits & Clips

Spirit of '67 with AIM Alumni

ROCK with the Spirit of '67 this Dec. 5 at the AIM Zen Garden of the Asian Institute of Management Joseph R. McMicking Campus at 123 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. The AIM Alumni Association is inviting all alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends to this 3-in-1 concert, party and raffle an get a chance to win fabulous prizes, including a brand new Toyota Altis. Proceeds go to the AIM Alumni Fund for Faculty Development. Tickets are priced at P1,000 and are available at the AIM Alumni Office, 4th floor, AIM Conference Center, Manila. For details, call Daycee or Shing at 750-6575.

FOB Association party

THE FRIENDS of Bislig (FOB) Association will be having its Christmas Party on Dec. 6, 5:30 p.m. at Rocky's Restobar along Timog Avenue near GMA Channel 7. There will be ample parking space at the Caltex gas station in front of Rocky's courtesy of VP Pancho Rodriguez. Enjoy a night full of fun, laughter, games, songs and magic with your friends from Bislig. Dinner is only at P300 per person, plus an exchange gift worth P200. FOB president Mario Buenaventura expects friends from Bislig to come in full force.

MLQ Law '53 homecoming

GRADUATES of the Manuel L. Quezon (MLQ) School of Law 1953, the celebrating Golden Jubilarians, are invited to the 2003 Annual Alumni Homecoming on Dec. 6 at MLQ University at R. Hidalgo Street, Quiapo, Manila. Registration shall commence at 4:30 p.m. at the School of Law Building at Arlegui Street, Quiapo, Manila. For more details, call lawyer Bienvenido Somera or Justice Corona Somera at 927-5446, Leopoldo Francisco at 842-3178, Lita Abela at (044)641-1875 or 0917-7546136, or Justice Nick Lapena at 921-4410.

Andrean Silver reunion

GRADUATES of Saint Andrew's School of Paranaque Batch 1978, on its Silver Jubilee Reunion, will host a retro show with live bands, dinner, photo gallery, raffle prizes and surprise celebrities titled "Ang Pagbabalik ni Andoy" on Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. at the school campus gym. Alumni are all invited to witness the turnover of the official school website. Tickets are sold at P500, and are available at St. Andrew's Alumni Office. Call Ms Pompa at 826-2129 or Sam Lim at 400-7733 or Nonoy Somillo at 776-7606 for more details.

Marriage encounter set

MATER DEI Marriage Encounter Community will be holding its Marriage Encounter Weekend on Dec. 5, 6 and 7 at the Society of Divine Word Retreat House (SVD) in Tagaytay City for a fee of P2,500 per couple. Interested couples can call numbers 371-9651 or 0920-9105881 for other information.

UAP celebrates Architecture Week

THE UNITED Architects of the Philippines (UAP) will celebrate 2003 Nationwide Architecture Week (NAW) from Dec. 7 to 14. This year's theme is "Ang Arkitekto ko at ako - Magkasama tungo sa bagong Pilipinas." The week-long celebration will initially feature a 2-km finger-painting event at Quezon City Memorial Circle. Simultaneous finger-painting events will be held in Baguio, Antique, Bacolod, Bohol, Capiz, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Leyte, Cagayan de Oro and Davao on Dec. 7 from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. In addition, the NAW organizing committee has lined up a series of activities to broaden the participation of architecture students, practicing architects, their families, and the general public. To cap the week-long celebration there will be an affair dubbed "Concert at the Wall" scheduled Intramuros, Manila on Dec. 14 at 6 p.m.

'Going Back to Bene'

HIGH school batch 1983 of St. Benedict College (formerly Benedictine Abbey School) is "Going Back to Bene" and is inviting all graduates and alumni to go back with them for a Grand Alumni Homecoming on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the school gym. Registration starts at 6 p.m. A fun-filled coming home affair awaits the graduates, with dinner, raffle of cool prizes and a live performance of The Fat Session Band.

FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN...

How it all began

IT ALL started with a Diners Club credit card mailer.

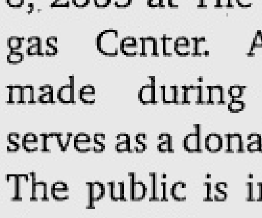
Contemporary artist Ms. Addie Cukingnan, a tenured Diners Club Cardholder, received a United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) donation mailer several months ago which touched her heart and led her to donate her personal works to support the agency's project for Filipino children.

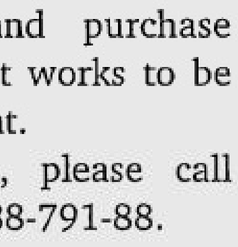
Hence, it was not merely the usual cash donation that Unicef ended up receiving as a result of the mailer. Instead, Unicef has become the recipient of a 60-piece collection of art works from Addie. The unique thing about this artwork line-up is its medium -- oil on wooden plates.

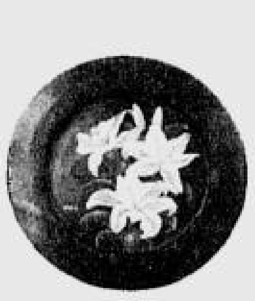
The art pieces will be put up for sale starting tonight when the fundraising exhibit "Flowers for Children" is formally opened. The representatives of Unicef, SB Cards Corporation (the exclusive franchise holder of Diners Club in the Philippines), Security Bank, The Podium together with Ms. Addie Cukingnan will be around to grace the event. Adding flavor to the occasion is the special participation of Ms. Isay Alvarez, Mr. Carlo Orosa and the Praise Factory Choir. Seattle's Best Coffee will be the food host for the evening.

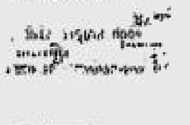
The exhibit will be open to the public from December 4 to 8, 2003 at The Podium, Ortigas Center. All purchases made during the exhibit serves as a donation to Unicef. The public is invited to visit the exhibit and purchase some of the art works to be part of this event.

For inquiries, please call Diners Club at 88-791-88.









THE WORLD'S
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Diners Club International

Artist Addie Cukingnan: "Passion and Compassion..."

FRESH from a successful art exhibit with other Filipino artists in New York and an ongoing joint exhibit with the Arte Pintura Group, painter/restaurateur Angeline "Addie" Sycip-Cukingan is all set for her exclusive, one-woman exhibit called ... Flowers for Children. This exhibit is being presented by Diners Club in cooperation with The Podium, for the benefit of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

When asked how this exhibit came about, Addie said that when she saw a mailer from UNICEF and Diners Club with a picture of an emaciated young girl, it reminded her of the young sampaguita vendor who used to frequent her old restaurant, New Tokyo, on Jupiter Street, whom Addie and her family eventually became friends with. "I was so moved by the picture that I knew I had to do something in my own small way that would benefit children like the sampaguita vendor so I got in touch with UNICEF and Diners Club," Addie said.

The conversation brought Addie, UNICEF and Diners Club together for a worthy cause. Tonight at 6:00PM, Addie will finally present her one-woman exhibit at The Lounge, 2nd Flr of The Podium that will showcase her latest works. Addie's works have been noted and praised for its artistry and detail to still life, landscapes, and portraits. Proceeds from the sale of her works will go directly to UNICEF assisted programmes for Filipino children and women.

How did a restaurateur like Addie, who is behind the Kitaro chain of restaurants, become interested in the arts? "I've been into the arts since I was a little girl. When we would spend summers in Baguio, where we have a home, my Mom would always buy me art materials and I would paint endlessly nature scenes, among others."

Given a choice, Addie would love to go into painting full-time. "It's very therapeutic for me. Sometimes, I even forget to eat. I paint upon waking up and upon coming home from work."

When asked what advice she would give aspiring artists, she echoed the words of her friend and mentor, Malang. "Never stop painting. Paint as often as you can. Constant practice is the only way to gain mastery of the brush."

Indeed, Addie Cukingan represents the best of a truly gifted artist¾one who has passion for her and, at the same time, has true compassion for others not as blessed as she.

ADVT

PEOPLE at WORK

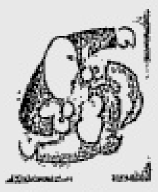
E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Pediatrician is hero to children

By Candy G. Villanueva

CAREER TALES



TWENTY kilometers north of Bacolod, Negros Occidental, in the sleepy town of Silay where the silence is occasionally interrupted by the droning of passing tricycles, there lives a hero. She is not only a hero because a piece of paper signed by President Fidel V. Ramos says so. Dr. Ma. Ceres Baldevia Gay is also a hero to the many children of what was known as the "Paris of Negros" as well as to twins Carl and Clarence who are joined at the head.

For the past few weeks, Dr. Gay was in New York to assist in the operation of 19-month old Siamese twins Carl and Clarence whom US doctors are attempting to separate using new medical procedures.

Accidental hero

Dr. Gay first earned her hero status in March 1998 when a Philippine Airlines' domestic plane overshot the runway in Bacolod. Fate had it that Gay and a Spanish doctor were in the vicinity. The doctors immediately rushed to the scene to attend to the injured pilot who was stuck in the cockpit. Her selfless and quick action proved invaluable. The good doctor was commended for her act of heroism by former president Fidel V. Ramos. Of her hero status, Gay shrugs her small shoulders and says, "It wasn't a big deal for me because I think it was just the right thing to do and it was my responsibility as a physician."

Dr. Gay was given another opportunity to become a hero, this time to Siamese twins Carl and Clarence. The Aguirre twins, joined at the head, were presented to Gay through the Philippine Pediatric Society. Moved, Gay sought to find help for the twins. "There was donor fatigue in our place and only a few local organizations helped me."

This time, fate again intervened. The Philippine Airlines Foundation referred her to the Children's Chance Foundation in Connecticut, USA. The Foundation in Connecticut brought in Dr. James Goodrich, a pediatric neurosurgeon of the Children's Hospital in Montefiore.

"The preparation and taking care of the twins was another challenge," recalls Gay. "There were even people who took advantage of them (twins) for publicity's sake and people who just made everything difficult for us but I guess when you are determined to achieve your goal, plus a lot of prayers, you will eventually succeed."

The first and second stages of the surgery were successfully completed last November. The main separation will be performed in February.

Compassionate heart

Living in a big house full of children, Gay stepped out of her comfort zone to pursue a medical career. She left her parents and six siblings to take a B.S. degree in Biological Science at the West Visayas State University in Iloilo. Free spirited and outgoing, Gay did not take her studies seriously. "My high school classmates can't believe that I am a pediatrician now. I only took pre med because I wanted to study in another place aside from Bacolod," Gay recounts amusingly.

But Gay's carefree journey eventually led her to discover her compassionate heart. "I finally realized I wanted to be a doctor when I was a postgraduate intern at the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital (CLMMRH)," says Gay. "I took care of indigent patients and realized that I could be of help. It was fulfilling."

She then volunteered for Operation Smile International and discovered the path carved out for her. "These exposures taught me what life is all about, changed my outlook in life. I learned the meaning of service, humility and contentment."

Challenges of charity work

Short haired and wide-eyed, her small frame packs vivacity and a humor. Aptly called Doctor Gay, her healing touch is usually coupled with good-natured teasing or unbridled laughter. Presented daily with numerous serious cases, Gay gets by with a sense of humor.

"Working in a tertiary government hospital is quite a challenge and has a lot of frustrations. The biggest challenge is when you have a patient who you know will live if only they have money. And the most frustrating are those patients who come to the hospital with end stage diseases that were supposed to be preventable or can be treated if only they were seen by a doctor earlier," Gay sadly shares.

DR. CERES Baldevia Gay (R) with sister Ailee and twins Carl and Clarence

A Department of Pediatrics Medical Officer of CLMMRH, Gay is an unabashed advocate of children and worthy causes. She is an active member, often an officer, of many foundations like the Philippine Pediatric Society, Children's International Summer Villages, Save a Life Project of St.Scholastica's Bacolod Alumnae Foundation, Assistance of Sick Kids Foundation and Forum Against Cancer through Education and Support.

Before the highly publicized surgery of the twins, Gay was in Norfolk, Virginia to teach Pediatric Advanced Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support courses to firemen, paramedics, nurses, medical students and volunteer doctors from 15 countries of Operation Smile. Aside from the opportunities that came with it, the experience in itself was a treat for the happy doctor.

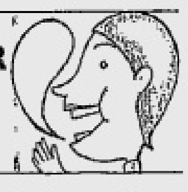
In spite of the tempting offers, Gay wishes to stay in her beloved hometown with her three little ones and her adopted children of Silay. "I still have a responsibility with Operation Smile and would like to pay them 'forward' for the training."

Dr. Gay has just come home after the twins' latest surgery. As soon as the jet lag wanes, you will be sure to find her once again championing causes and treating tiny runny noses with a cheery laugh.

Agri-entrepreneur seeks business advice

By Gary B. Teves
President and Chief Executive Officer, Land Bank of the Philippines

ASK YOUR CEO



DEAR Mr. Teves,

I found your advice in the People at Work page of the INQUIRER very substantive. Could you help me with my plans to go into profitable goat breeding in a 1.5-hectare farm beside my 7-hectare sugarcane plantation in Bago City, Negros Occidental?

I would appreciate receiving the Land Bank primer and information on how I can avail of R.A. 09178 regarding Barangay Micro Business Enterprise Incentives & Benefits (BMBEs) for loan purposes to support my intention to make goat breeding profitable in two years time.

What documents would I need to get financing from Land Bank? I started with 10 female goats and one male goat in 2000 just to get the feel of the activity and determine if it can be made into a business. From this herd, I have now a second male father goat, 10 old female goats, nine young female goats, and nine small male goats. I employ 2 male helpers around the area and one female helper.

On the side, I am testing native chicken breeding in an open range. I have two roosters, 22 hens, 44 "teenage" chickens and 21 chicks. I started this with five hens and one rooster in year 2000. I am also trying to plant Guimaras Mango seedlings bought from La Granja Bureau of Plant Industry in La Carlota for the second time because my first 100 seedlings died last year.

Suffice it to say that I started thinking that it can be developed into a profitable business, but got burned instead with lots of expenses. My guess is that I need to target a population of about 100 female goats to become profitable. But, I will need borrowed money at a low interest rate to build a concrete house for the goats and feed them with formulated feeds to keep them alive particularly during summer. With this population, I will need a veterinarian and additional helpers.

My predicament now is whether to continue or stop by year 2004 because it has drained my retirement money. I am about to turn 62 years old. I retired in 1998 as a chemical sales engineer. There are other problems too which are common to farms in the provinces like robbery, sickness, floods during rainy season, etc. Thank you in advance for your advice and assistance. More power to your endeavors and congratulations in maintaining a good stewardship of Land Bank.

I.A.Y.

More people are venturing into farming these days, either as a career or as a hobby. As with all new business endeavors, however, there is no standard formula for success. Thus, on your question on whether to quit or continue with farming as a second career, I believe you need to carefully weigh the various pros and cons before making a decision that is truly right for you.

Fulfillment

Based on my experience, the deciding factor for most of my career decisions has been the personal fulfillment derived from the job and how passionately I feel about overcoming the challenge at hand. These are some of the factors you will need to consider carefully before making your decision on whether or not to take on this new challenge.

Some disadvantages that come to mind, for example, are your limited experience, technical knowledge and capital. On the plus side, you have the available land, access to learning from classes and books, and can look forward to being your own boss.

While the business of farming may offer tremendous opportunities, there will always be risks involved. Of course, these opportunities can be optimized with careful planning, sufficient knowledge and access to financing. Risks, on the other hand, can be managed with sound preparation, proper exposure and good old-fashioned common sense.

Study the business

Before you go into commercial production, I strongly recommend that you read as much literature as possible on goat breeding or even better, attend practical seminars or classes. The Department of Trade and Industry-Technology and Livelihood Research Center (DTI-TLRC), Bureau of Animal Industry and the Central Luzon State University provide these regularly.

For your financing requirements, you have three options. Avail of loans from qualified conduits or micro finance institutions (MFIs). These include rural banks, thrift banks, cooperatives, non-government organizations and foundations. Under R.A. 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise Incentives and Benefits (BMBE), MFIs can release initial loans ranging from P3,000 to P5,000 per borrower for a maximum of P150,000.

If your financial requirements exceed the P150,000 limit under BMBE, your project qualifies as a small to medium enterprise. This will allow you to avail of loans from countryside financial institutions (CFIs), such as rural and thrift banks, that generally cater to SMEs.

Land Bank assistance

Finally, you can avail of loans directly from Land Bank. Kindly visit the Land Bank Lending Center in Negros Occidental, and our personnel there will advise you on the necessary requirements for loan application (Lending Center Head is Jeffrey Maningo at (034) 435-0149). They can also provide you with a list of accredited MFIs, if you decide to pursue one of the first two options.

While financing is necessary, you will also need to consider other equally important factors. The standard female-to-male ratio of 25:1 requires two hectares of pastureland. If you are aiming for 100 female goats, you will need to provide more pastureland than your current 1.5-hectare area.

CEO mentor Teves

With regard to your organic chicken business, the standard hen-to-rooster ratio is 10:1. One chicken will require at least two square meters of grassland. Knowing this will help you determine the correct number of chickens for a particular area, thus maximizing productivity and avoiding overcrowding.

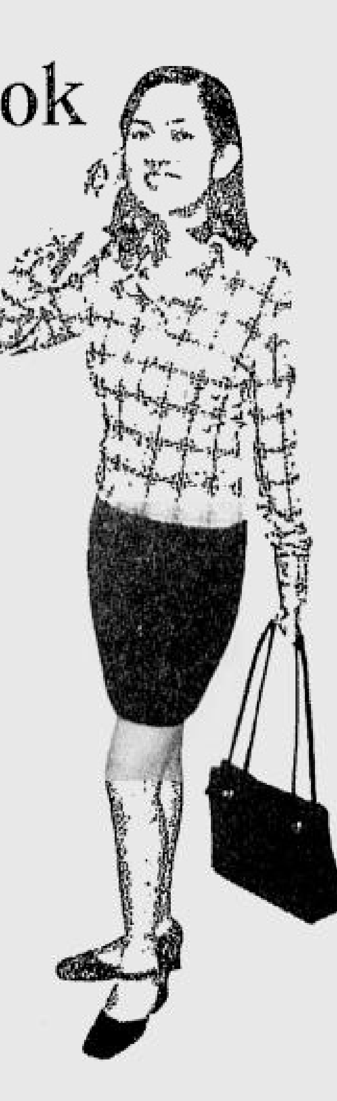
If you should decide to pursue farming as a second career, the success of your business will ultimately depend on your commitment, dedication and hard work. I believe that the degree to which you demonstrate all these qualities will depend on your passion for what you are doing. Best of luck on your endeavors!

(Our CEO columnists can answer requests for career advice through this column. Send your request by postal mail to People at Work Editor, PDI Bldg., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City 1200 or e-mail peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.)

DRESS FOR SUCCESS (PART II)

Accessories, shoes complete the look

By Candy G. Villanueva



SOME women have this habit of lugging their stuff around in a paper bag. Even if the paper bag is from Ferragamo or some fancy Italian store, it is never appropriate to use it. Ladies can opt for a simple stylish bag. The golden rule is to match the color of your shoes to the color of your bag and your belt.

Leather suggests corporate. Canvas suggests casual. If the budget doesn't allow you to buy genuine leather, synthetic will do the trick. Plastic folders are for kindergarten. For men, a plain brown folder for the resume would do. Don't go to an interview or presentation with your documents rolled up in your hand.

In the past, open-toed sandals are no-nos for companies but our warm climate has afforded us the freedom to air our toes. However, for interviews, closed pumps with one and half-inch heels are recommended for the ladies. Wearing higher heels might make you wobble while shaking hands with your interviewer or client. Remember, you need to look grounded. If you're wearing a skirt, always wear panty hose stockings.

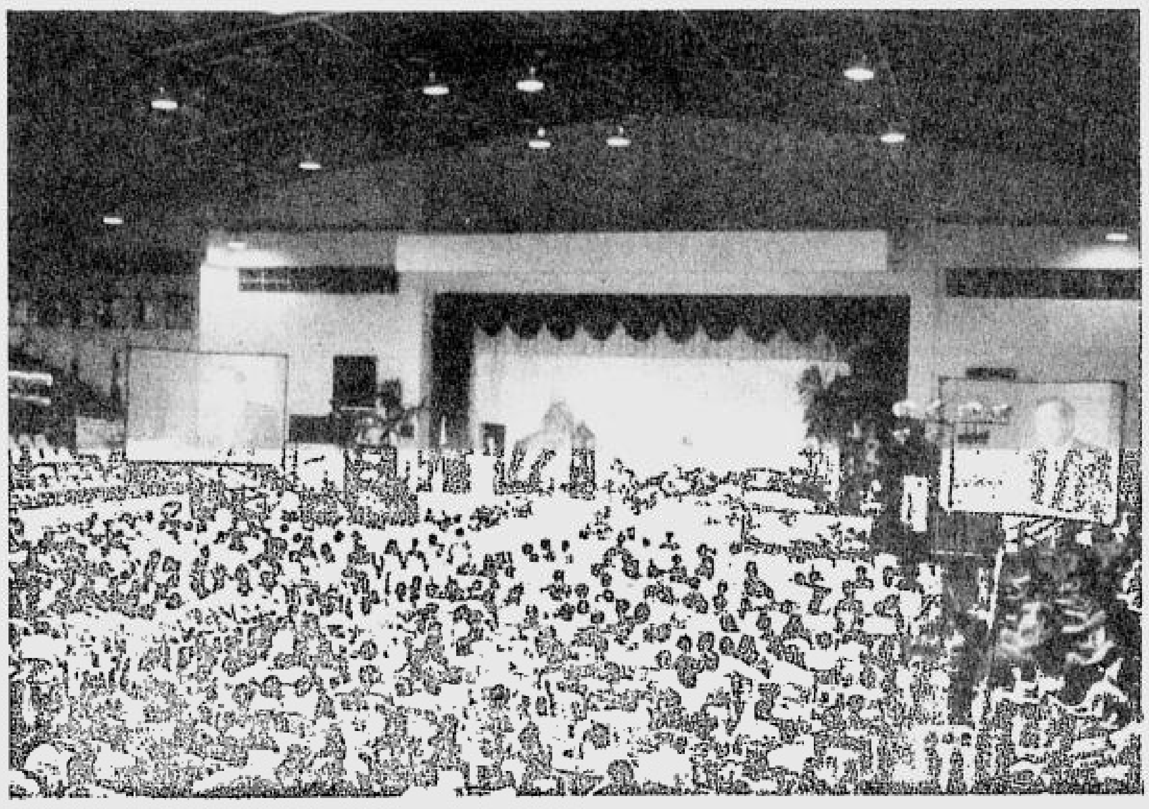
Men are expected to wear leather or plain black or brown footwear. Socks should also be of the same dark color. No skin should show when one sits down. This means the elastic around your leg should be snug. You can't afford to have your socks loose around your ankles. Beware of bulky ornate buckles. Try to match your belt with your clean and well-shined shoes. Mickey Mouse ties became the fad for a while, but it would be best to stick to subtle prints for the all important meeting. Ties should fall around the belt buckle, not longer nor shorter. Keep jewelry to a minimum. Minimize flash. A watch is the best jewelry you can wear.

Gone are the days of black and white. Today is an era that celebrates color. Elle Woods may have taken it a bit over the top but pink did the trick for her.

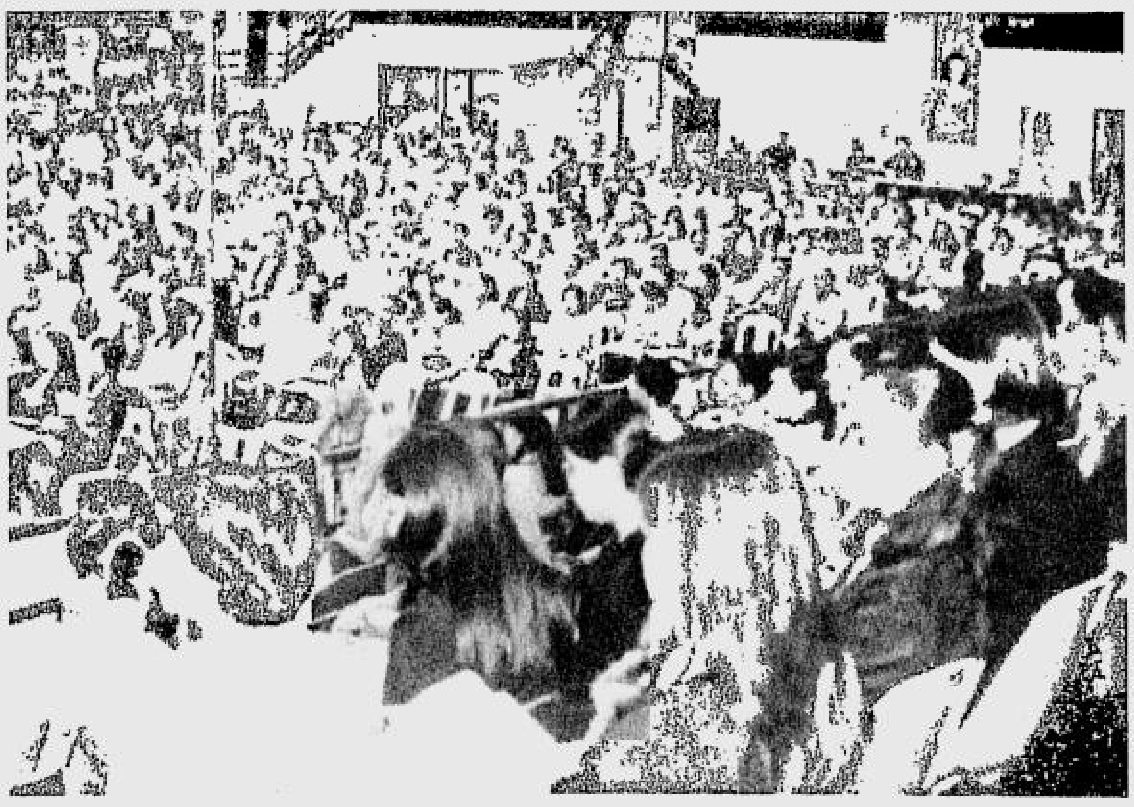
Today's corporate look doesn't always equate to conservative. You do not have to lose your individuality and your sparkle under a constricting gray blazer. Brown, black, white and gray are safe hues but you could also make a statement with pastels. Dark reds or deep greens are also elegant.

Experiment with colors without going overboard. Neon colors and glitter are best left to road signs and night joints. Put a hint of color in your all black ensemble with a daring scarf tied loosely around your neck or an elaborate brooch or pin on your chest.

Whatever you decide, just remember that you're out there to make a statement, not a splash. Never overdo. In the end, what matters are confidence and a big smile.



AROUND 2,000 came to learn at PICPA'S 57th Annual National Convention



ALBAY Astrodome is jampacked with participants hungry for learning

PICPA, Inquirer partner to bring optimum learning

Photos by Niño Jesus Orbeta

PICPA and Philippine Daily Inquirer together brought a unique learning experience for accounting professionals and Bicolanos in the 57th Annual National Convention of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) which was held from Nov. 26 to 29, 2003 in Legazpi City, Albay.

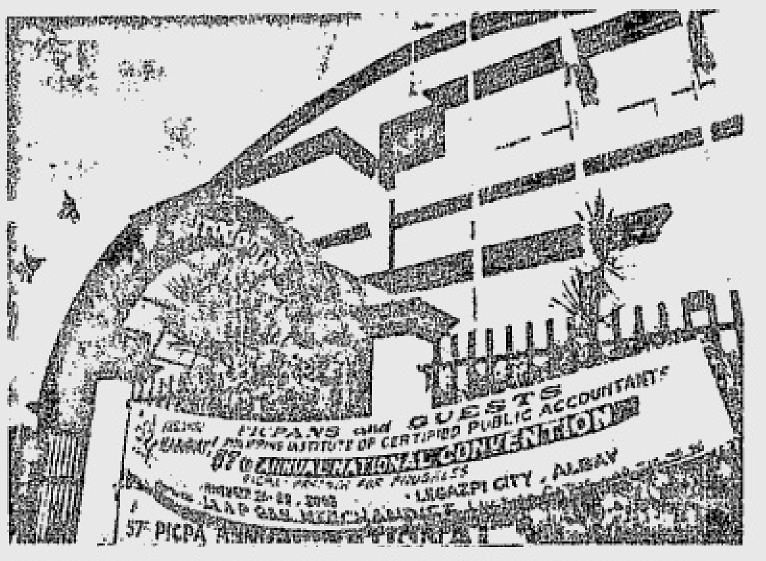
This milestone learning event provided information, learning and insights from a powerhouse roster of resource persons coming from government, business and media.

The opening plenary session's keynote address was given by former Senator and DECS secretary Raul Roco.

Then, in a unique partnering innovation, PICPA devoted the afternoon to the People at Work Live! Seminar Series composed of three learning sessions on "Discovering and Developing Your Passion at Work and in Life," "Getting Ahead at Work Without Leaving Your Family Behind," and "Creativity for Continuous Competitiveness." The sessions were conducted by Regina Galang Reyes, People at Work editor, An Mercado Alcantara, deputy editorial director, ABS-CBN Publishing Inc., and Teresa Reyes Tunay, editor-in-chief, Blue Collar Magazine respectively. The seminar series' group dynamics activities were facilitated by Joy Fallarme Neri. This seminar series was opened to the public at affordable prices, the first time that a convention has done so. This is also the first time that a PICPA convention has tackled non-financial topics.

COA Chairman Guillermo Carague was the guest speaker during the luncheon meeting of the second day of the convention. An educators' forum was also held in the afternoon. Other speakers were Undersecretary Opida of the Department of Budget and Management representing Secretary Emilia Boncodin, and Carol E. Carreon, vice chairman of Bayantrade.com Inc. who tackled the topic Accounting.net (e-procurement). Juan T. Imperial, foreign exchange trader of Standard Chartered Bank, and Wilson P. Tan, SGV partner dsicussed Financial Instruments (IAS 32 & 39). Sonny B. Coloma, professor of the Asian Institute of Management, and Edward I. Fereira, president of the Management Association of the Philippines talked about "Raising the bar of excellence for a better Philippines," a discussion moderated by former Pangasinan governor Oscar Orbos.

The convention was attended by over 2,000 PICPA delegates and Bicolanos.


PICPANS and GUESTS
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A SUNNY welcome for the PICPA delegates and People at Work Live! Seminar participants

Restive Mayon captivates PICPA delegates

By Ronnie Lorejo and Joyce Mejillano
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY--Though showing signs of restiveness lately, the majestic and perfectly cone-shaped Mayon Volcano in Albay province captured the awe and admiration of the members of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants and guests who attended the 57th PICPA National Convention held on Nov. 26-29 at the Albay Astrodome in Legazpi City.

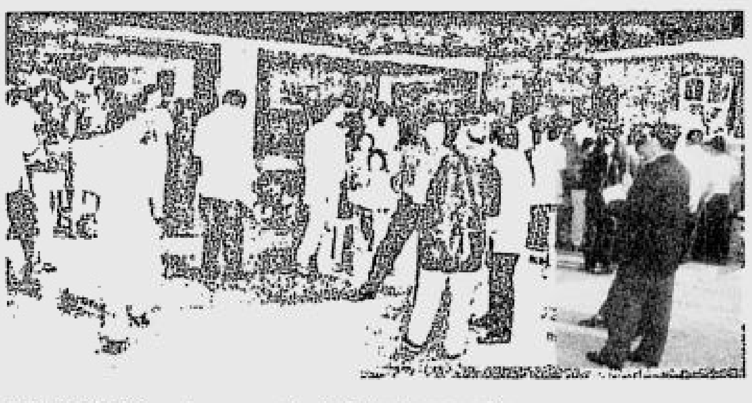
Here are some of their comments: "It's a breathtaking sight! "Maybe you guys here in Bicol have been used to and take it for granted. But for me, it took a lot just to be here in Bicol and see it. I took a two-day off from my work and missed my Mom's birthday." An Mercado Alcantara, deputy editorial director of ABS-CBN Publishing Inc.

"Really breathtaking, and spine-tingling! It's my very first time to view Mt. Mayon volcano this close and personal, just in time with my comeback to my home country after 34 years of staying in the United States." Romy de Guzman, president of the PICPA Los Angeles Chapter and consultant of LA Citizens Crime Commission.

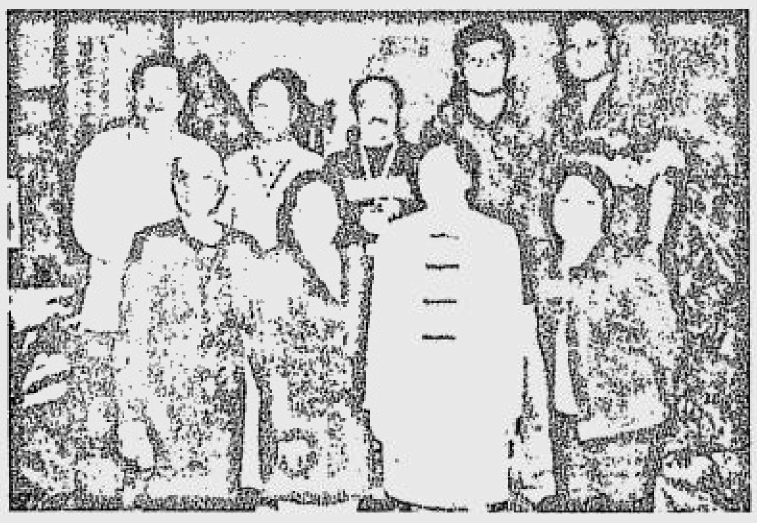
"It's amazing, and I feel like I want to stay!" Jude S. Villarosa, accountant of the Lepanto Mining Corporation in Makati City.

"I'm excited to see the Mayon Volcano." Eden Gaurano from Dolores, Quezon.

"It's my first time here. Mt. Mayon is really great. Albayanos are really hospitable to their guests, which greatly spiced up the brilliance of the volcano." Rosalino G. Fontanosa, 1992 most outstanding CPA in overseas work during PICPA confab in Davao and 1991 president, Saudi Arabia Chapter.

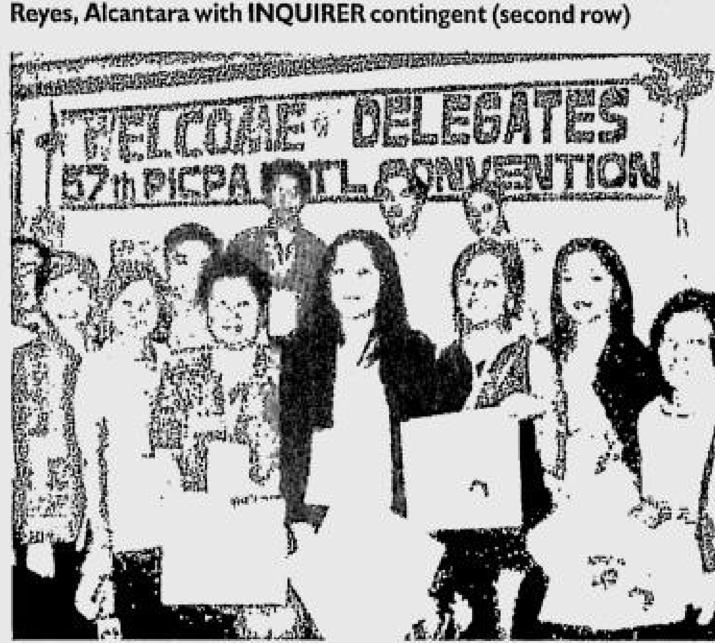


DELEGATES exchange notes in between sessions

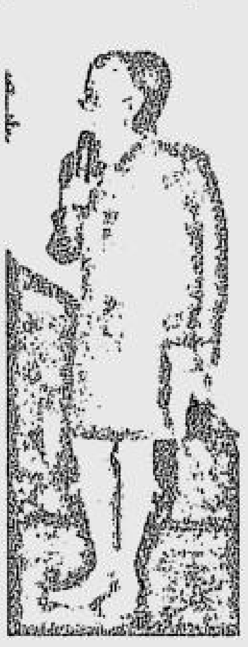


PEOPLE at Work Live! Seminar speakers (front row L-R) Tunay, Neri, Reyes, Alcantara with **INQUIRER** contingent (second row)

INQUIRER'S HR Head, Jesse Rebustillo (extreme right) amidst the discerning crowd

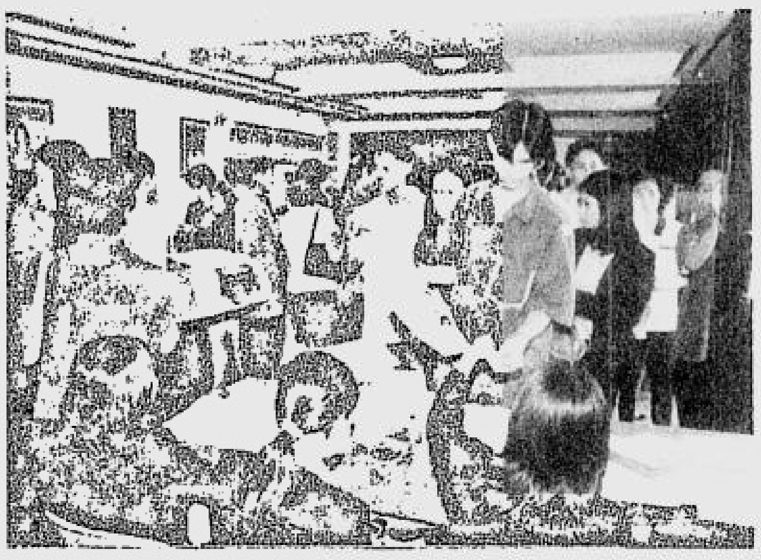


PICPA convention organizers with their copies of Philippine Daily Inquirer



SPEAKER Tunay

EMCEE Neri



DELEGATES registered throughout the day

Delegates hail 57th PICPA meet

By Ronnie Lorejo and Joyce Mejillano
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Delegates to the 57th National Convention of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA), especially those based in foreign countries, hailed the conduct of the event and its venue, the province of Albay.

The PICPA meet, which started on Nov. 26 and ended on Nov. 29, was attended by about 2,000 CPA-delegates. In an interview with the INQUIRER, Romy de Guzman, president of the PICPA Los Angeles Chapter and consultant of the Los Angeles Citizens Crime Commission, was all praises for the PICPA officials and convention organizers.

De Guzman received a special award in professional development—international category during the convention. "The attendance was very encouraging and I was overwhelmed by the number of participants. As to the entire convention and its facilities, it was well-organized and beyond expectations," he said, adding that the convention seemed to be a culmination of a long preparation.

According to him, he got lots of ideas from the convention, which he can certainly apply in their own PICPA convention abroad. "As a chapter president, I got an idea on how to handle real big activities like this and I want to duplicate it back in the US," De Guzman added. "It was very impressive, and I couldn't believe Legazpi City to be this progressive."

"It was my second time to attend the convention and it was livelier. Speakers were articulate, with active audience participation, especially in the People At Work session. Very interesting topic, and I can apply it to my work. Also, this would be a great preparation for me when I have my own family," claims Jude S. Villarosa, 28, single and accountant of the Lepanto Mining Corporation in Makati City.

Raul B. Aguilos, 2003 Outstanding CPA in Government Service, said it was his second visit in Legazpi City because of the convention. His last visit was 13 years ago. "A lot of significant developments that touched the region never changed Bicolanos' hospitality, which make them real 'oragons' (smart)," Aguilos said. "The People At Work session is a very relevant preparation for the people in corporate world. The matter of balancing everything between work and family was given emphasis for the very first time." He said CPAs should come to realize the importance of this convention. "The attendance was great and we hope to increase it even more next time."

For Doris Bigyan, a PICPA delegate from Tiaong, Quezon, "The convention was very good and organized. I learned a lot, especially in the People at Work seminar series.

It's very suitable for us, especially the talk about getting ahead without leaving families behind by An Mercado Alcantara. It helps a lot for us, working moms."

As to the impression of the place, Bigyan said Albay, particularly Legazpi City, is nice. "I thought Bicol is a very flood-prone area but now I realize it's a very nice place. It's clean and people are friendly. It's a place na talagang babalikan. Plus nice food, of course," Bigyan added. "Aside from the alluring Mayon Volcano, this city and its people impressed the PICPA delegates."

"The place is very peaceful, and the people are very warm and accommodating. The people are really caring to their guests, which greatly spiced up the brilliance of Mt. Mayon volcano," noted Rosalino G. Fontanosa, 1992 most outstanding CPA in overseas work during the PICPA confab in Davao. The finance office of the Asia Pacific College based in Makati City, Fontanosa was the 1991 president of the Saudi Arabia Chapter, the first international chapter to raise funds for the Central Luzon lahar calamity victims. "The discussants were very good and the topics themselves were very fitting for professionals like us. It was a very big event yet very organized," he remarked.

Fontanosa lauded the security and the maintenance of peace and order provided by the police officers headed by Chief Supt. Jaime Lasar, Bicol regional director. "The cooperation of local officials led by Legazpi City mayor Noel Rosal is commendable," he said. Eden Gaurano of Dolores, Quezon disclosed, "The People at Work talks were great. We can get several pointers which can help our career, personal growth and likewise, family. I hope to hear more about the topic regarding balancing work and family. For me, as a working mom, the problem is how to balance my time for my family and for my job so I'm happy to hear such talks." Gaurano observes that Legazpi City has warm people.

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FEELS GOOD 4127758

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LBAHAY 7113540

L-BAHAY 712-16-92

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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

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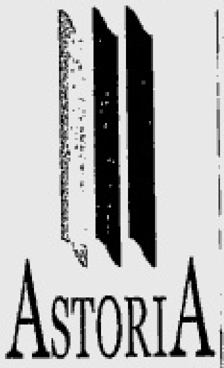

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BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/2tb/grge
P3.435M 8903461 loc 34

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MANILA

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LAGUNA

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MARIKINA

nr Ateneo 2BR 1TB grge
Montevista P7T 681-9583

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2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSN DRS OFW 524-3197

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CONDO/TWHSE/ FOR SALE/RENT

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MB-100 7415897

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1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% CARLOAN 952-2510

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/o Taking Car 6567685

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

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EDUCATION PLAN 8061574

EDUCATION PLANS 7137284

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18-50 Hi-Salary Betty 4385743

DIRECT HIRE OFC MKTG STAFF 18-45yo w/w/o exp Coll grad/ugrad T-4387472 Ms Olga

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MKTNG OFC STF 09208062187

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St. Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on **DEC. 09, 2003** Tues., at 2:30 in the afternoon. Respectively, July 13-Aug 09, 2003. SONS of J. LANUZA, Auctioneer.
(PDI-December 03, 2003)

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. **AUCTION SALE** on Dec. 09, 2003 Tues. at 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, Respectively. July 13 - Aug. 09, 2003. SONS OF J. LANUZA, Auctioneer.
(PDI-December, 03 2003)

MI MARA Pawnshop of 251 Quirino Ave. Baclaran P'que. M. M. **AUCTION SALE** on Decc. 09, 2003 Tues. at 4:00 in the afternoon. Respectively. July 13 - Aug. 09, 2003 Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer
(PDI-December 03, 2003)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Estate of the late Sps. Maximino Fariscal & Desideria B. Fariscal was extrajudicially settled by the heirs as per Doc#475 Page#95 Book#IV series of 2003 by Notary Public Atty. Cesario E. Buscano of Makati City MM.
(PDI-Dec. 3, 10 & 17, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Extra-Judicial Settlement of Estate with Absolute Sale

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late GREGORIO G. CARZON and JUANA M. CARZON has been extrajudicially settled among their heirs before Notary Public LEONARDO C. AGUILAR, JR. as per Doc. No. 19, Page No. 3, Book No.9 Series of 2003.
PDI-Nov.26, Dec.3&10, 2003

Notice is hereby given that the estate of Gorgonio A. Monte, consisting of conjugal share over Transfer Certificate of Tile No. 71970, a real property consisting of a residential building and lot located at Talon 3, Las Pinas City, MM. was adjudicated to his Surviving spouse Mira Tulsidas-Monte and children Gabriel Gobind, Percival Prakash and Dheena Mae Monte by means of a public document executed on Nov. 7, 1994 and ratified before Atty. Federico Florendo Jr., Notary Public in Pasay City MM and entered into his Notarial Registry as Doc. No. 30; Page No. 7; Book No. 8, Series of 1994.
PDI-Nov. 26, Dec. 3 & 10, 2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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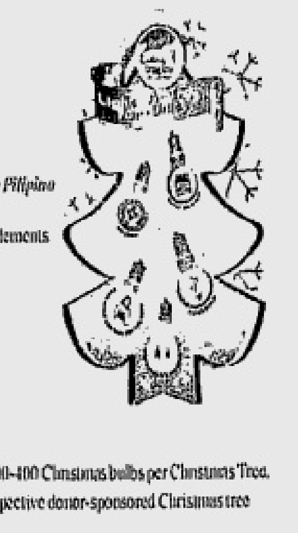
Light-A-Tree-for-Unity
Pasinaba ang Galing ng Pilipino Ngayong Pasko

You can make the celebration of Christmas this year a unique,
heartwarming showcase of what is good and excellent about being Pilipino
by supporting *Pamaskong Galing Pilipino 2003*
together with the Galing Pilipino Movement (GPM) and its cause-partners.
This massive concerted effort will rally Pilipinos, here and abroad,
to positively project the Philippines as the *"Christmas capital of the world"*
where social good is tangibly achieved by synergistic endeavor and the *"bayanihan"* spirit.

Be part of this history-making moment
by being our *PGP Corporate Christmas Tree Donor* or *PGP Individual Christmas Bulb Donor*
Please free to call GPM at 631.3932 or fax 633.1089 or text 0917.835.4829 or 0919.587.7949,
Look for Bhelle or Williey.
Or call Advent, Inc at 687.2269 or fax 687.2559, look for Louwi or Patrick.

YES, SALI AKO!
SA PAMASKONG GALING PILIPINO



☐ PGP Corporate Christmas Tree Donor at PhP 150,000.00/Christmas Tree
- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor Name to be appended to one (1) Christmas tree in the *Pamaskong Galing Pilipino* display at the Luneta Park from December 16, 2003 to January 4, 2004
- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor Name to be listed in *Pamaskong Galing Pilipino (PGP)* newspaper supplements
- ○ Entitles Corporate Donor to nominate the specific cause to which their donations will be allocated

Corporate Name
Address
Contact Person
Contact Number
Preferred cause

☐ PGP Individual Christmas Bulb Donor at PhP 150.00/Christmas Bulb
- ○ Entitles individual donors to choose the cause they want to support. There will be approximately 300-400 Christmas bulbs per Christmas Tree.
- ○ Individual Christmas bulb donations from the network of a Corporate donor will be hung on the respective donor-sponsored Christmas tree

Name
Address
Contact Number

☐ I will donate a total of ___ bulbs (as indicated below) × PhP 150.00 = PhP ___

Philippine Red Cross · *Bantay Kalikasan* · *SOS Children's Villages* · *ACDA Peace Build Mindanao* · *Care-Giver Centers for the Aged*

Payment made to GPM Foundation Inc through:
☐ Union Bank Account No. 00-401-008201-3 ☐ BPI Family Account No. 6751-0011-32 ☐ Postal Money Order

☐ I will write, e-mail, text, and link Filipinos, here & abroad, to join the *Pamaskong Alay sa Mundo Galing na Pilipino* on December 16, 2003.

Please fax this form to *Galing Pilipino Movement* at 633.1089 or *Advent, Inc.* at 687.2259

Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka
PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN NG PAGSASAKA AT PANGINGISDA
(National Agricultural and Fishery Council)
Diliman, Lungsod ng Quezon
Tel. No. 928-8741 to 65 local 510

Tender No. 2003NPGA6th/02

December 1, 2003

INVITATION TO BID

The National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) hereby invites sealed bids for the sale of 19,100 (+0% / -5%) metric tons (MT) at seller's option of Ammonium Sulphate Fertilizer for end December to early January 2004 arrival of shipment.

Tender documents can be secured from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), NAFC, Apacible Hall, Department of Agriculture Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City starting on **December 4, 2003.**

Prospective bidder may start submitting their pre-qualification documents on **December 5, 2003.** The deadline for submission of the pre-qualification documents shall be on **December 12, 2003.** Pre-qualified bidders shall be notified anytime before the pre-bid conference. Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to attend the pre-bid conference which shall be held on **December 17, 2003** at 2:00 p.m. at the NAFC Conference Room.

Only fully completed sealed bids from pre-qualified bidders shall be submitted not later than 10:00 a.m. on **December 19, 2003.** Bids received after the scheduled time will not be accepted/entertained and will be returned unopened.

For details, please contact Ms. Paz Ventic or Ms. Peachy Agustin at tel. nos. 928-1966 or 929-8234.

(Sgd.) **MARIDEL TRINIDAD-DIZON**
Executive Director

(PDI - Dec 3 & 10, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION
Scout Reyes Street corner Panay Avenue, Quezon City
Tel. No. (02) 374-3987 Fax No. (02) 374-2505

RE-INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION (NTA)**, through its **Disposal Committee**, invites interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the disposal/sale, on a **"Lot-Stock and Barrel Basis"** of its Golden Leaf Village situated at Bo. San Isidro, Rodriguez, Rizal.

The Golden Leaf Village has a total land area of 83,513 square meters, with a net saleable area of 54,193 square meters and 91 units of houses.

Minimum Bid is, as follows:

Lot - P2,250.00, per square meter
Houses - P25 Million, lump sum (91 units) on an "as is-where-is basis"

The eligibility requirements are available for issuance to interested parties on **03 December 2003** at the Administrative Department, 3rd Floor, NTA Bldg., at the above address. The deadline for the submission of pre-qualification documents shall be on or before the close of office hours on **15 December 2003.**

Eligible Bidders shall be notified thru formal letters, of the date and time of public bidding. The instruction to Bidders and the bid Forms will be issued only to Eligible Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable Bidding Fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00).

The NTA reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part/s, thereof, without offering any reason, waive any defect/s contained in any of the bid/s submitted and/or accept the offer most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **MAMERTO E. ELLORIN**
Chairman, Disposal Committee

(PDI - Dec 3, 2003)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that **Mr. RODERICK MANUEL DE GUZMAN**, whose picture appears above, has ceased to be employed with **SCS Placement Services Inc.**, effective October 23, 2003.

He is no longer authorized to represent or conduct any business for SCS Placement Services Inc. in any capacity. Henceforth, any transaction entered by Mr. De Guzman on behalf of SCS Placement Service Inc. shall no longer be valid and binding upon the company.

(PDI - Dec. 3, 2003)

REVOCATION OF GENERAL POWER OF ATTORNEY

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That I, **FRANCISCA V. PENARANDA**, of legal age, residing at 615 N Meyler St., San Pedro, California, U.S.A. 90731, after duly sworn to according to law, deposes and say that:

a) That I am revoking the General Power of Attorney (With Durable Provision) of Mrs. Anastacia B. Villamor, residing at Benezville I, Apitong, Tacloban City, Leyte, Philippines, notarized by Notary Public Patrick Di Bernardo last May 15, 2000 and acknowledged by Philippine Consul Roy B. Ecraela under Official Receipt No. 5174, Service No. 16475, Doc No 9982, Page No 182, Series of 2000.

b) That I am attaching a Xeroxed copy of said copy of the General Power of Attorney (With Durable Provision) including the acknowledgement signed by the Philippines Consul Roy B. Ecraela.

c) That the purpose of this revocation of General Power of Attorney of Mrs. Anastacia B. Villamor is to stop her from using said authority given to her in dealing with any of the Real Estate Transactions, Tangible Personal Property Transactions, Bond, Share and Commodity Transactions; Banking Transactions; Business Operating Transactions, Insurance Transactions, Claims and Litigations; Records, Reports and Statement and the Durable Provision.

PRINCIPAL FURTHER SAYETH NONE.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affix my signature this 22 day of July 2003 at California, USA.

Francisca V. Penaranda
FRANCISCA V. PENARANDA
PRINCIPAL

Signed in the presence of:

Witness

Helen G. Tienza
Witness

(PDI-Nov. 19, 26 & Dec. 3, 2003)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that the following Policies & O.R. of Alpha Insurance and Surety Co., Inc. issued to **A.G. Santos Insurance Agency** will not be honored effective Oct. 31, 2003 for the reason, these were not reported & submitted to the Co.

O.R. No.: 203951 to 54, 203970, 203993 to 96, 203998 to 400, 203901 to 27, 203930 to 31, 203939 to 42, 223803 to 04, 223807, 223810 to 11, 223824, 223841 to 50, 240551 to 55, 240557, 240559 to 83, 240585 to 94, 240596 to 600, 245201 to 50, 272751 to 800. **SURETY BOND Nos.:** 4664 to 66, 4668, **PERFORMANCE BOND Nos.:** 3820, 3823 to 24, 3826, **BIDDER'S BOND Nos.:** 12756, 12761 to 64, 14664, 14668, 14671 to 76, 14694, 14700, 20301 to 50, 21001 to 50.

(PDI-Dec. 3, 2003)

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24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

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ASR – *willing to be assigned anywhere in Mindanao*
Trainee – *North Luzon*

General Qualification:

- M/F, 21-30 years old
- College Graduate, preferably in the field of Animal Science (DVM, BSAH, BSAS, BS Agriculture or any related course)
- Excellent command in oral & written communications;
- Honest, hardworking and aggressive;
- At least 2 years experience in Sales, previous experience in the field of Animal Health Industry and products would be an advantage.
- Preferably a resident or geographically familiar of the above mentioned areas
- Driving Skills required, with valid driver's license.

For Trainee requirements – newly graduates are welcome. *For Mindanao assignment*- candidates are preferably registered Veterinarian & with experience in poultry and swine raising; knows how to speak Visayan, Tagalog & English languages.

Interested applicants are requested to submit their comprehensive Resumé, 1x1 ID picture and Transcript of Records at:

THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT
2nd Floor Aurora Milestone Bldg., 1045 Aurora Blvd.,Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 913-21-84 locals 121 & 136 Telefax: 913-21-84 loc 106
Email mars.guarra@eudoramail.com

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COTABATO CITY WATER DISTRICT
Cotabato City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cotabato City Water District invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for public bidding of Supply and Delivery of materials with an approved budget of P8,689,801.73 for the following:

I. Flocculation Structure and Civil Works
II. Pipelines and Related Civil Works

Issuance of Bid Documents schedule
I : December 04-12, 2003
II : January 05-14, 2004

Interested parties may secure Bid Documents and Detailed Specifications during office hours at Cotabato City Water District, Governor Gutierrez Avenue, Cotabato City.

Opening of bids shall be indicated in the bid documents as per schedule.

The CCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the CCWD. The CCWD likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL D. MAGDAEL**
Chairperson
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--Nov. 27 & Dec. 3, 2003)

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will entertain offers on a First-Come, First-Served basis at the Asset Management Department, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City for the following properties:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
MANILA			
CWB-7	No. 19, Road 7, Pag-asa, Quezon City	240 m² residential/commercial lot covered by TCT No. 209559 w/ 3-storey residential/ factory/office bldg.	P 6,281,600.00
BATAAN			
	Sta. Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis, Camaya, Mariveles:	Residential lots with bldg. & imprvts.:	
AMD-MC-87	Lot -27 Blk - 20	50 m² TCT No. T-229480	P 190,000.00
AMD-MC-88	12 9	50 m² TCT No. T-229472	P 190,000.00
AMD-MC-89	14 20	50 m² TCT No. T-229492	P 186,200.00
AMD-MC-90	8 8	50 m² TCT No. T-229471	P 179,200.00
BICOL			
BIC-DCA001	San Pedro, Sta. Elena, Camarines Norte	50,000 m² agro-residential lot (TCT No. T-46018)	P 1,531,300.00
BULACAN			
AMD-PY-91	Cagayan Valley Road, Bgy. Tambubong, San Rafael	6 contiguous industrial lots (TCT Nos. T-167376 to T-167381), total area of 45,997 m²	P 55,196,000.00
		Building & improvements w/ permanently installed chattels erected on above lots	P 20,364,000.00
CAVITE			
DIG-LS-02	Bo. Mambog, Bacoor	2 adjoining residential lots (TCT Nos. T-935854 & T-935855) total area of 120 m² w/ bldg. & imprvts.	P 602,600.00
AMD-PY-92	Along Provincial Road, Bo. Sinaliw, Malaki, Alfonso	768 m² residential lot (TCT No. 369067) w/ bldg. & imprvts.	P 329,200.00
DAVAO			
	Kristina Homes Subd., Lizada, Toril, Davao City	Residential lots with bldg. & imprvts.:	
AMD-PY-93	Lot-22 Block-5	116 m² TCT No. T-347751	P 177,700.00
AMD-PY-94	23 1	110 m² TCT No. T-347755	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-95	18 5	110 m² TCT No. T-347754	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-96	37 3	110 m² TCT No. T-347753	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-97	35 3	110 m² TCT No. T-347752	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-98	4 5	110 m² TCT No. T-347750	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-99	15 5	110 m² TCT No. T-347749	P 173,200.00
AMD-PY-100	34 3	110 m² TCT No. T-347748	P 173,200.00
LAGUNA			
DIG-LS-03	Bo. San Antonio, San Pedro, Laguna	2 adjoining residential lots (TCT Nos. T-468390 & T-468391), total area of 324 m²	P 939,600.00
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AMD-ML-101	La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak Quezon City	1-unit Road Grader, HUBER WARCO approx. 2.5 m. blade length	P 85,500.00
CWB-7a to -7l	No. 19, Road 7, Pag-asa, Quezon City	6-units various machinery and equipment (pneumatic high speed overarm router, RU LONG/ radial arm saw, MAGGI/air compressor Ingersoll Rand / hand jointer planer, HWA SHIN/pneumatic nailer & stapler)	P 600.00 to 103,600.00

Forms for negotiated offers may be obtained from AMD-Acquired Assets
For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:
892-1566 / 893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2218/2252 for Code starting with AMD;
892-3836 or 818-9511 loc. 2227 or 1424 for BIC;
926-1686 or 818-9511 loc. 1411 for CWB; and
(082) 553-2933 / 553-3689 or 818-9511 loc. 1469 for DIG.

(PDI – December 3, 2003)

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of **SPI SOLUTIONS, INC.** (the "Corporation"), which shortened the term of its corporate existence to end on December 31, 2003 and thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date, has been approved by its Board of Directors and shareholders at duly constituted meetings both held on November 14, 2003.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same at the Corporation's principal place of business located at SPI Building, Pascor Drive, Sto. Niño, Parañaque City.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

(Sgd.) GEMMA A. SANTOS
Corporate Secretary

(PDI – November 26, December 3 & 10, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIVE)
ORDER NO. 222 :
Series of 2003)

SUBJECT : Regulations on the Operations of Danish Seine (Hulbot-Hulbot)

Pursuant to Section 92 of RA No. 8550, this Order regulating the operation of Danish Seine in Philippine waters is hereby promulgated for the information, guidance and compliance of all concerned.

SECTION 1. Definition of Terms – The terms used in this Order shall be construed as follows:

a. **Danish Seine** – is an active fishing gear which consists of a conical net with a pair of wings, the ends of which are connected to a rope embedded with buri, plastic strips, sinkers or any similar materials to serve as scaring/herding device and hauled through a mechanical winch or by manpower.

b. **Modified Danish Seine** – is an active fishing gear locally termed as *holbot-holbot, palisot, zipper, bira-bira, hulahoop, liba-liba, buli-buli* and other coined names consists of a conical net with a pair of wings, the ends of which are connected to a rope embedded with buri, plastic strips, sinkers or any similar materials to serve as scaring/herding device as hauling ropes passing through a ring permanently attached to a tom weight (lingote) and hauled through a mechanical winch or by manpower.

c. **Municipal Fishing** – refers to fishing within municipal waters using fishing vessels of three (3) gross tons or less, or fishing not requiring the use of fishing vessels.

d. **Commercial Fishing** – the taking of fishery species by passive or active gear for trade, business or profit beyond subsistence or sports fishing, to be further classified as:

   1. Small-scale commercial fishing – fishing with passive or active gear utilizing fishing vessels of 3.1GT to twenty (20) GT.
   2. Medium–scale commercial fishing – fishing utilizing active gears and vessels of 20.1 GT up to one hundred fifty (150) GT; and
   3. Large-scale commercial fishing – fishing utilizing active gears and vessels of more than one hundred fifty (150) GT.

e. **Municipal Waters** – include not only streams, lakes, inland bodies of water and tidal waters within the municipality which are not included within the protected areas as defined under Republic Act No. 7586 (The NIPAS Law), public forest, timber lands, forest reserves or fishery reserves but also marine waters included between two (2) lines drawn perpendicular to the general coastline from points where the boundary lines of the municipality touch the sea at low tide and a third line parallel with the general coastline including offshore islands' and fifteen (15) kilometers from such coastline. Where two (2) municipalities are so situated on opposite shores that there is less than thirty (30) kilometers of marine waters between them, the third line shall be equally distant from opposite shore of the respective municipalities.

f. **Tom weight (lingote)** – is a type of weight made of lead, iron, stone or concrete materials of various shapes and provided with rings weighing about 1 kilogram and above which is lowered to the sea bottom or hung above the sea bottom by means of a rope where the pull ropes pass the rings during hauling operations.

g. **Bureau** – refers to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

h. **Director** – refers to the Director of the Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources

i. **Person** – refers either to a natural or juridical person.

SECTION 2. Prohibition – It shall be unlawful for any person to operate municipal and commercial fishing boats using Danish seine and modified Danish Seine in catching fish within municipal waters, bays and management areas. The operation of modified Danish Seine may, however, be allowed in waters beyond fifteen (15) kilometers from the shoreline of any municipality provided that it shall not use tom weights and any method/accessories that destroys coral reefs, seagrass beds and other fishery marine habitats and that the minimum mesh size of the net shall not be less than three (3) centimeters.

SECTION 3. Penalty – The operator, boat captain, master fisherman and recruiter/organizer violating this Order shall suffer a penalty of imprisonment from two (2) to ten (10) years and a fine of not less than one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) to five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) or both fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the court. The catch and gear shall be confiscated.

SECTION 4. Repeal – All orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 5. Effectivity – This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and/or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and fifteen (15) days after its registration with the Office of National Administrative Registrar.

Issued this 30th day of October, 2003 at Quezon City.

LUIS P. LORENZO, JR.
Secretary

Recommended by:

MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.
Director
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

CESAR M. DRILON, JR.
Undersecretary for Fisheries and Livestock Chairman, NFARMC

(PDI - Dec. 3, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT
Bids and Awards Committee
DIVISION OF EASTERN SAMAR

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

December 3, 2003

To All Qualified Bidders:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) towards the cost of financing the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments for civil works component of the project. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the ***Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC Loans. (Nov. 1997)***

2. The Division Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites sealed bids from eligible bidders of at least Small Sub-category B.

Package 1 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Two (2) Units – Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Cabay Elementary School and Balogo Elementary School at Municipality of Balangkayan.
Package 2 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Two (2) Units – Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Maybocog Elementary School and Omawas Elementary School at Municipality of Maydolong.
Package 3 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Three (3) Units – Nine (9) Classrooms School Building at Bacayawan Elementary School, San Miguel Elementary School and San Jose Elementary School at Municipality of Llorente.
Package 4 – Construction of One (1) Unit – One (1) Classroom School Building at Quirino Elementary School and Repair/Rehabilitation of One (1) Unit – Two (2) Classrooms School Building at San Isidro Elementary School at Municipality of Gen. MacArthur.
Package 5 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Two (2) Units – Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Gigoso Elementary School and Paya Elementary School at Municipality of Giporlos.
Package 6 – Construction of One (1) Unit – One (1) Classroom School Building at Batang Elementary School at Municipality of Oras.
Package 7 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Two (2) Units – Six (6) Classrooms School Building at Casuroy Elementary School and San Isidro Elementary School at Municipality of San Julian.
Package 8 – Repair/Rehabilitation of One (1) Unit – Five (5) Classrooms School Building at Santo Thomas Elementary School at Municipality of Sulat.
Package 9 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Three (3) Units – Twelve (12) Classrooms School Building at Malinao Elementary School, Nato Elementary School and San Luis Elementary School at Municipality of Taft.
Package 10 – Repair/Rehabilitation of Three (3) Units – Nine (9) Classrooms School Building at Bahay Elementary School, Binogawan Elementary School and Cajagwayan Elementary School at Municipality of San Policarpio.
Package 11 – Construction of One (1) Unit – One (1) Classroom School Building at Buenavista Elementary School and Repair/Rehabilitation of Two (2) Units – Eleven (11) Classrooms School Building at Arteche Central Elementary School and Beri Elementary School at Municipality of Arteche.

3. Bidding Documents may be purchased at DepEd Division Office of Eastern Samar with Address at San Fernando St., Borongan, Eastern Samar from December 3-January 5, 2004 for a nonrefundable fee of One Thousand Pesos Only (Php1,000.00) for each set. Pre-bid conference will be on December 17, 2003, 9:00 AM at DepEd Division Office of Eastern Samar. Interested bidders may be obtain further information at the same address.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security in the amount of 2.5% of total bid price, and shall be delivered to Division's Bids and Awards Committee, Department of Education – Division Office of Eastern Samar, San Fernando St., Borongan, Eastern Samar on or before **January 5, 2004, 9:00 AM** for Packages 1, 2, 3 and 4, **January 6, 2004, 9:00 AM** for Packages 5, 6, 7 and 8 and **January 7, 2004, 9:00 AM** for Packages 9, 10 and 11 at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

(Sgd.) **NINA J. VILLALON, Ph.D. CESO VI**
Chairperson
Division Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Dec. 3, 2003)

In Loving Memory
On the 5th Death Anniversary
Of

EDGARDO "NONI" TROTA

(July 4, 1939 – December 3, 1998)

His loving wife **Noreen**; children, **Carolyn & Jog Salud, Cristina & Buddy Garcia, Robert & Rica Trota & Jimmy Trota**; Grandchildren **Micah, Joseph, Miguel & Paolo Salud, Maxine, Martin, Nicky & Tianna Garcia, Luis & Patricia Trota.** together with their family and friends, request the pious readers to offer prayers for him.

Holy Masses will be offered for the eternal repose of his soul today December 3, 2003 at the following churches:

Sacred Heart Parish – Kamuning	5:15 a.m., 6:00 a.m., 7:00 a.m.
Malate Church – Malate	6:00 a.m., 7:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio Church – Forbes Park	7:30 a.m., 12:00 nn., 6:00 p.m.
St. John Bosco Parish – Makati City	6:30 p.m.
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish – Ermita	6:30 a.m., 12:15 nn., 6:00 p.m.
Saint James Church	6:20 a.m., 3:00 p.m.
Sto. Niño de Paz – Greenbelt	7:15 a.m.
Saint Jerome Church – Alabang	6:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.
Mt. Carmel Shrine – New Manila	6:00 a.m., 7:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

LYDIA BATACLAN TOLENTINO

18 November 1918 – 30 November 2003
Corregidor and Quezon City

Widow of the late

COL. (RET) EDGARDO M. TOLENTINO (†)

Her bereaved children and grandchildren

Edgardo Tolentino, MD

Elizabeth and Amb. Juan Ona
Joelle & Miles, and Leonid

Evelyn and Benjamin Punongbayan
Jay & Apple, and Michelle

Engr. Enrique and Cecilia Peterson
Mark & Nathalie, Charles and Meg

Milagros and Steve Flores

Dennis and Raquel Torres
TJ, Tanya and Niko

Susan and Val Dalton
JB, and Joey & May

great-grandchildren, brother and sister, relatives and friends will appreciate prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at the **Christ the King Church**, Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, 6 December 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass

---

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Salvacion Mejorada Barrios

of Roxas City, Capiz

Peacefully joined her Creator on December 1, 2003 at the age of 83.

Her late husband **Isidro (†)**; loving children **Lita** and **Rene, Chito** and **Ems, Nonoy** and **Marlene, Nini** and **Boy, Titin** and **Nenen**; grandchildren; sisters **Corit** and **Milly**; late brothers **Peter** and **Aning (†)**; nephews, nieces, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest.

Her remains lie at the family residence in Fuentes Drive, Roxas City.

Interment will be on Saturday, December 6, 2003 at the Roxas City Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 A.M. Mass at the Mount Carmel Church.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

"My soul finds rest to God alone; from Him comes my salvation."

Our Dearly Beloved

BENJAMIN M. ZIALCITA, M.D.

1931 – 2003

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 1st day of December, 2003 at the age of 72.

His loving wife **Cristina**; children **Eduardo & Claudine, Jorge, Benjamin III, Fernando** (†), **Concepcion & Joel**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on December 04, 2003 at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

MARIA DE LEON DIMAYA

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, extended help and assistance, and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

The Missionary Sisters
Servants of the Holy Spirit

Announce the death of

SISTER ELY ANN, S.Sp.S.
(MAMERTA PEÑARANDA)

on December 2, 2003 at the age of 67 at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Manila.

Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on Friday, December 5, 2003 at 3:00 p.m.
At the Convent of the Holy Spirit, 8 Poinsettia Road, Quezon City.
Interment will follow at the Christ the King Cemetery, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City.

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❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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AYALA CINEMAS

PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	ArtFilm 1 ASH WEDNESDAY 12:45, 2:45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 OUT OF TIME 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10, 11:30	THX 1 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
2 STAR RUNNER	2 THE GRUDGE	2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 12:25, 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15	2 OUT OF TIME
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 OUT OF TIME 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	REGINE VELASQUEZ Dec. 5 & 6, 12 & 13, 19 & 20, 9PM	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 STAR RUNNER 12:10, 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00	3 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
4 SCARY MOVIE 2	4 ADAM SANDLER'S 8 CRAZY NIGHTS		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
	5 LOONEY TUNES		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 COLD CREEK MANOR	5 LOONEY TUNES
	6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY			
	7 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS			

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Ali 1	MR. SUAVE
Ali 2	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
Ali 3	FIGHTING TEMPTATION
Ali 4	OUT OF TIME
Ali 5	STAR RUNNER
Ali 6	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
Ali 7	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY

ARANETA COLISEUM

DEC 3	PBA FINALS 2: COKE VS. SMB
DEC 5	PBA FINALS 3: SMB VS. COKE
DEC 7	PBA FINALS 4: COKE VS. SMB
DEC 8	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
DEC 10	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

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MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	CHAVIT SINGSON
B	AKO, IKAW, SIYA
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	AKO, IKAW O SIYA
CINEMA-3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LOONEY TUNES
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MR SUAVE
CINEMA-6	WRONG TURN
CINEMA-7	SEX SCANDAL
CINEMA-8	CHAVIT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MASTER AND COMMANDER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LOONEY TUNES
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	COLD CREEK MANOR
CINEMA-12	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-14	CHAVIT
CINEMA-15	MR SUAVE

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	MR SUAVE
CINEMA-1	UNDERWORLD
CINEMA-2	MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
CINEMA-4	AMERICAN PSYCHO

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA

ELF topples Matrix Reloaded at the Boxoffice.

Weekend Box Office (Novembe14 - 16, 2003)

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER.COM

Last weekend, Elf snuck past two giant epics to claim the number one spot at the North American box office in its second weekend. Fox's **Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World** bowed in second with a sturdy debut while **The Matrix Reloaded** fell to third.

Who knew at the beginning of the month that the mighty sci-fi sequel **The Matrix Revolutions** would be outgunned at the box office by Elf? The Wachowski Brothers epic once again suffered the worst decline in the top ten stumbling 57% to $7M in its third battle for Zion. The Keanu pic has raised its 19-day total to $125.4M and looks to end its domestic run in the neighborhood of $140M

With a production cost of about $65M, the Jon Favreau-directed ELF boosted its ten-day cume to a jolly $70.4M and with such strong legs and the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays still to come, could find its way to $150-200M. Though too early to compare, Elf will surely end up doing more business than Matrix Reloaded in the US boxoffice.

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

LOONEY TUNES GP 11:55, 1:50, 3:45, 5:40, 7:35, 9:30	FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS GP 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	OUT OF TIME R13 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10
JEEPERS CREEPERS R13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	STAR RUNNER PG13 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY PG13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:20

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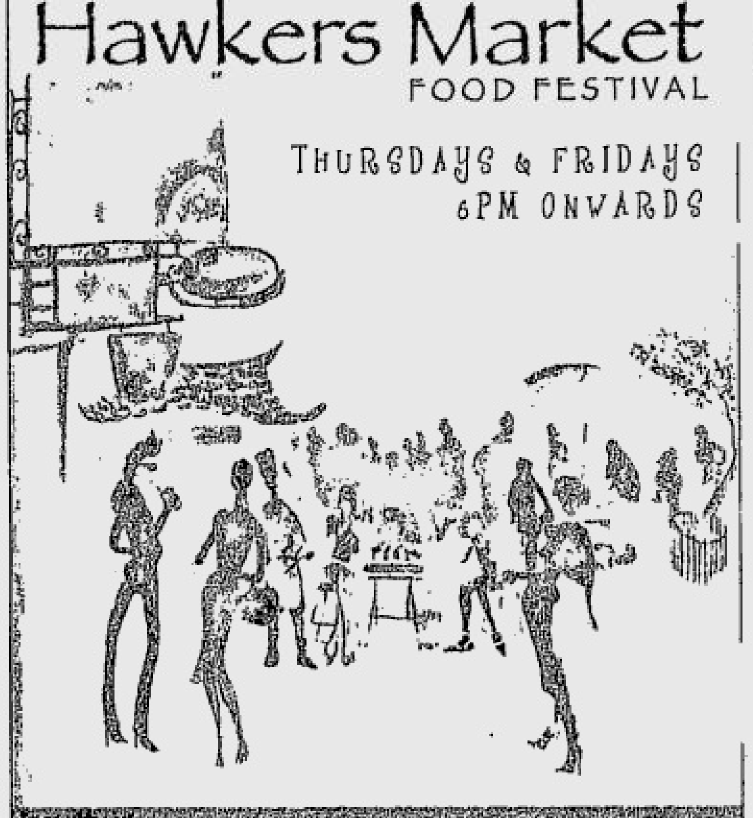

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2 (SDDS)	SCARY MOVIE
3 (DTS)	STAR RUNNER
4 GOLD (DTS-ES)	OUT OF TIME
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	FIGHTING TEMPTATION
6 GOLD (SDDS)	MASTER & COMMANDER
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	INTOLERABLECRUELTY
8	MR. SUAVE
9	CHAVIT SINGSON STORY
10	GRUDGE-1

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3 (DTS)	RESERVE
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5	AKO, IKAW, SIYA

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5	STAR RUNNER
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7 (DTS)	JEEPERS CREEPERS-2
8	SCARY MOVIE
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4	CHAVIT SINGSON STORY

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2	OUT OF TIME
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4	STAR RUNNER
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5	STAR RUNNER
6	JEEPERS CREEPERS-2
7	INTORERABLE CRUELTY

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2	
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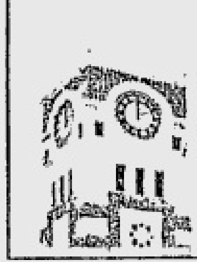

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9 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
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9 MR. SUAVE
10 BABAE SA BREAKWATER

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10 SCARY MOVIE 3
11 CHAVIT SINGSON
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7 STAR RUNNER
8 BABAE SA BREAKWATER

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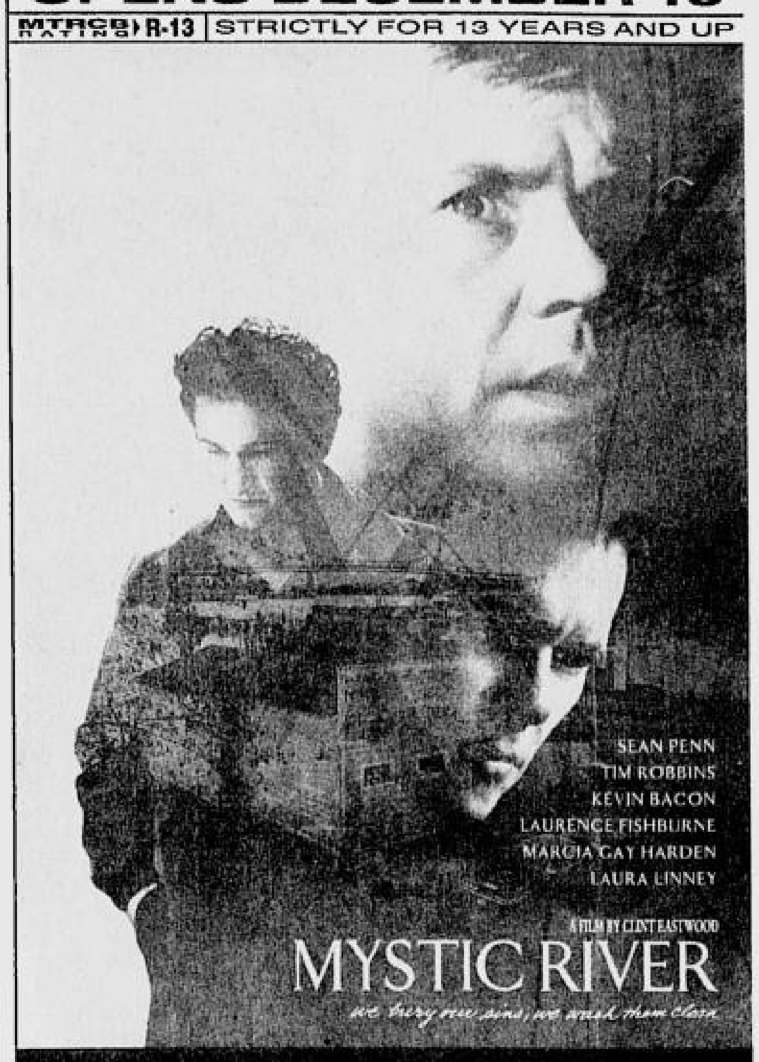

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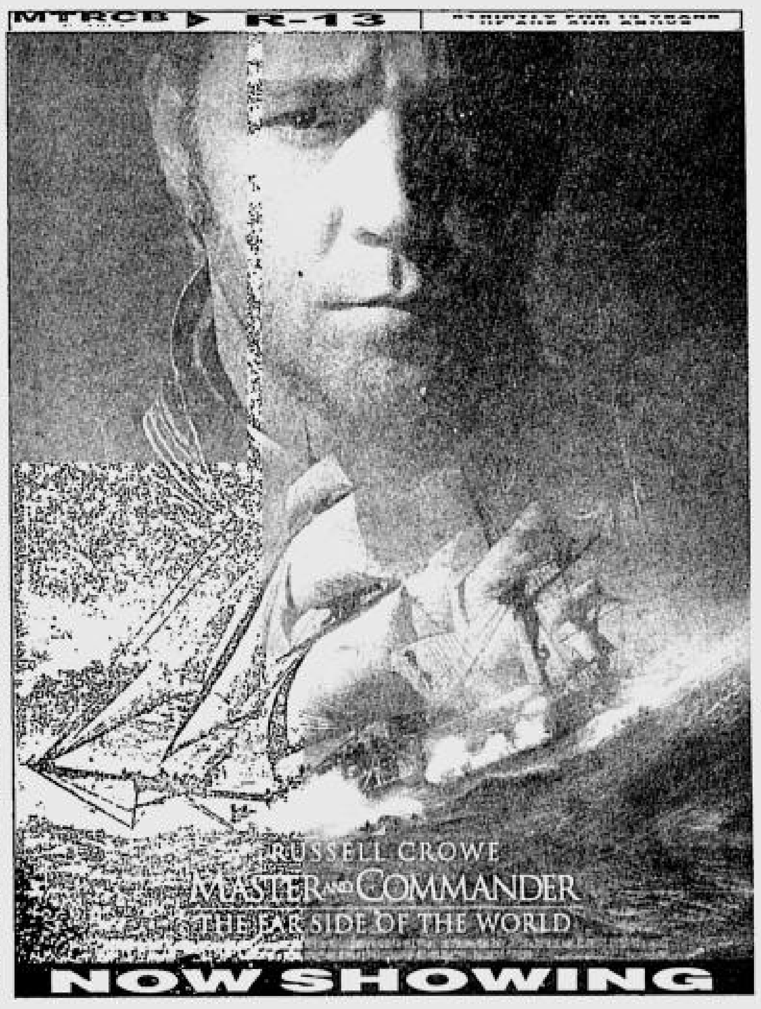

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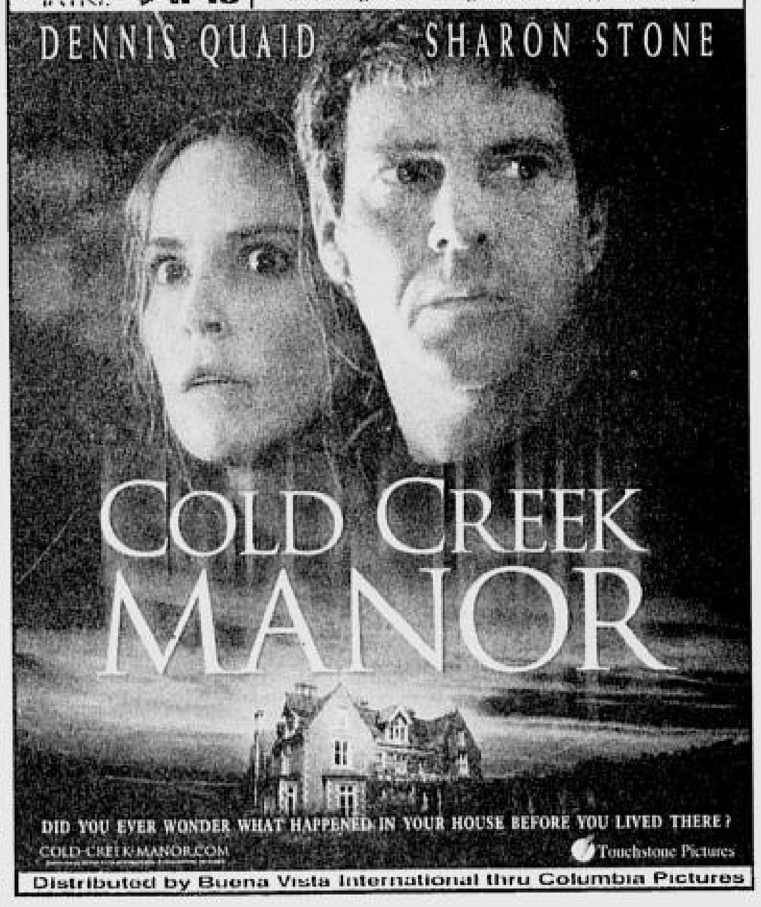

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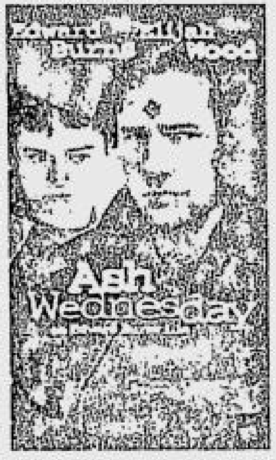
Ash Wednesday

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18

Elijah Wood *Edward Burns*
Rosario Dawson *Oliver Platt*

Ash Wednesday

Hells Kitchen, Ash Wednesday, 1980. Sean Sullivan (Elijah Wood) is killed in a vendetta. Three years later, Seans brother Francis (Edward Burns) receives word that Sean may be alive. But the truth isnt always what it seems in this neighborhood, where violence and betrayal are the local currency.

"Suspenseful and ultimately unpredictable, with a sterling ensemble cast."
— Kevin Thomas, L.A. Times

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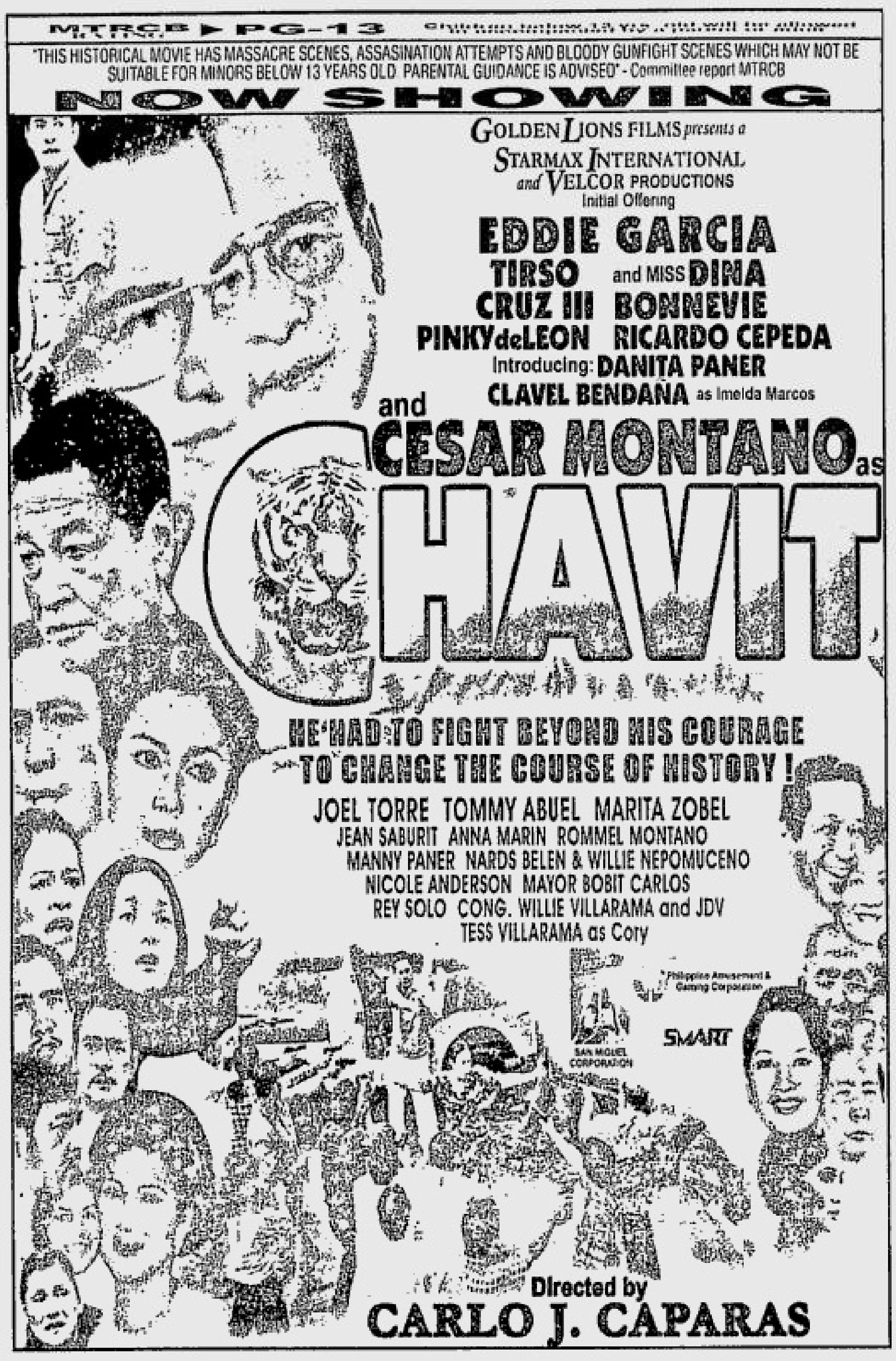
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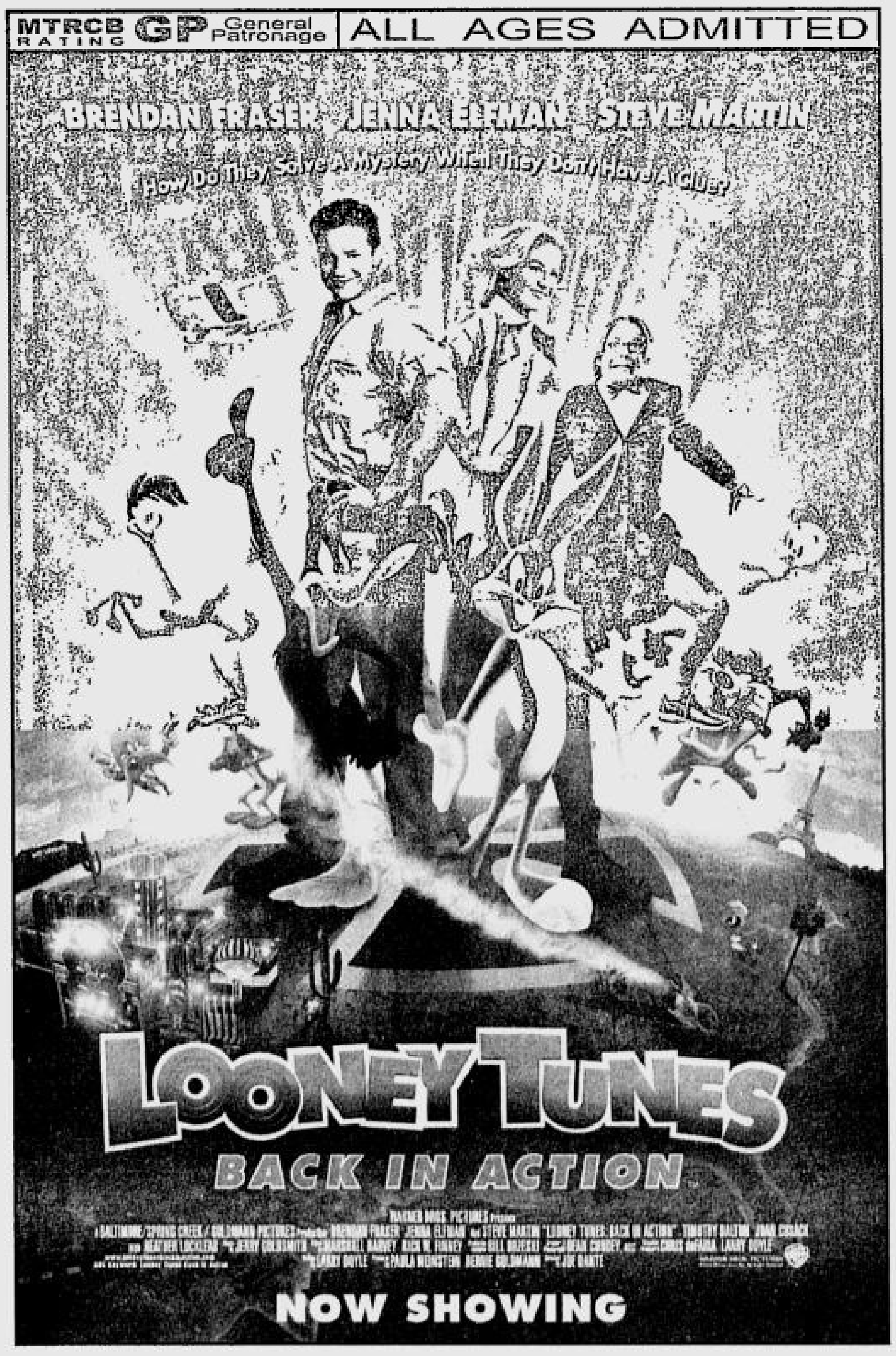
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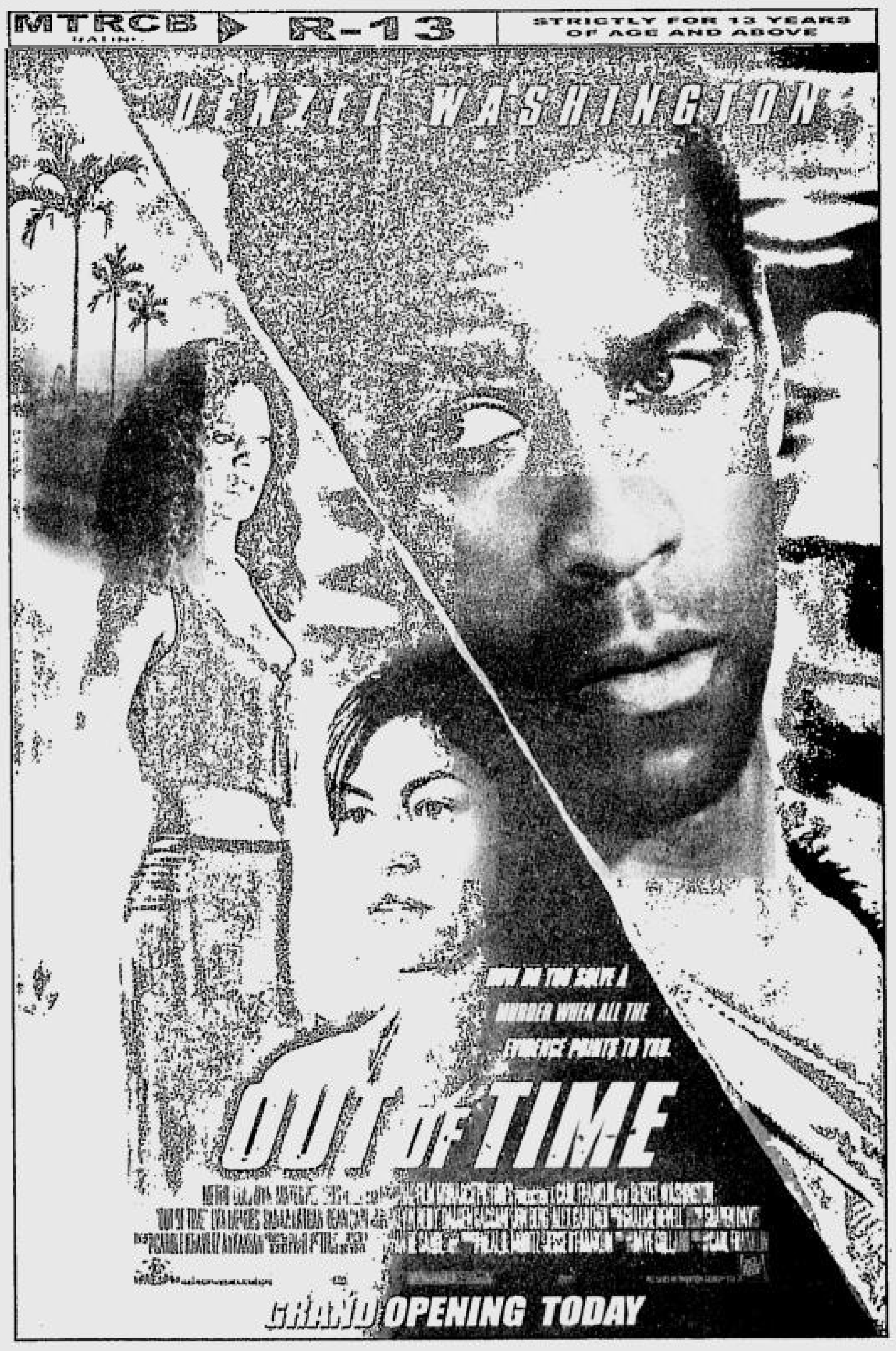
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Napocor foreign funding needs to reach $2B in '04

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration has estimated that the National Power Corp. would need as much as $2 billion in foreign funds next year, especially if it would not succeed in the sale of its transmission and generation assets.

"Napocor will need between $1.2 billion and $2 billion in 2004 but the power firm is still firming up the numbers. The numbers would depend on the company's privatization and revenue generation efforts," said National Treasurer Sergio Edeza.

The Energy Regulatory Commission had turned down the request of Napocor for an increase in its power rates. Its inability to raise its rates will translate to additional $300 million in its foreign funding requirement, according to a government source.

Napocor said it would tap the foreign markets by January to raise part of its funding needs.

In the meantime, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it had approved the Japan Bank for International Cooperation's 6.9-billion-yen buyers' credit facility to be tapped by Napocor.

BSP managing director Diwa Guinigundo said Napocor would use the credit facility to finance the Leyte-Cebu interconnection project, which is deemed crucial in solving the power crisis in the Visayas.

The funds will be used to pay Japanese suppliers that will participate in the construction of the transmission infrastructure.

Napocor will use the proceeds of the foreign borrowing to finance its capital expenditure program and maturing obligations in 2004.

But given the difficulty of the state-owned power firm to borrow for itself, the national government may end up raising most of the requirement of Napocor on top of completing its $1.8 billion financing needs, of which only $750 million had to be raised.

The central bank wants the national government and Napocor to tap the foreign markets in financing its requirements for next year to avoid depleting the gross international reserves.

"As much as possible, we would like Napocor to borrow on its own. It has to sell its own name and borrow under its own credit," said Edeza earlier.

The importance of the power firm borrowing on its own even became more crucial after former Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho decided to leave his post. Edeza had also submitted his letter of resignation effective end-January.

Camacho and Edeza are two of the government's most credible finance executives. Both are seen crucial in managing the fiscal sector and tapping cost-effective borrowings.

Mineral production growth slows down

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S mineral production barely improved in the first nine months of this year, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau yesterday reported.

Data from the Bureau of Mines showed that from January to September, gold and silver production inched up by only 2 percent to 34, 691 kilograms from 33,765 kg.

Bureau of Mines' mineral economics division chief Benjamin de Vera said this was the result of the lost production capacity brought about by the closure of the country's major mines, including the San Antonio Copper Project, Dizon Copper-Gold Project, Placer Gold and Copper Projects, Sipalay Copper Project and the Bulawan and Sibutad Gold Projects of the Philex Mining Corp.

De Vera noted that the value of mineral production increased due to improved metal prices in the world market.

He cited that the nine-month average price of gold was recorded at $354.05 per ounce this year, compared with the $305.56 per ounce in 2002.

Production of copper concentrates grew by 9 percent while that of refractory chromite grew by 111 percent.

Nickel production, however, dropped by 25 percent as the three remaining nickel producers in the country—Cagdianao Mining Corp., Rio Tuba Nickel Mining and Taganito Mining Corp.—registered production shortfall.

DTI picks Cebu, 4 others as country's next IT hubs

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has chosen Cebu as the next information technology hub due to its modern telecommunications facilities and skilled workforce.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said in a statement yesterday that developing Cebu as an IT hub was in line with the DTI's thrust to encourage IT services firms to base their operations in other strategic locations in the country.

Cebu will be inaugurated as an IT hub on Friday during the DTI e-Services Forum at the Marriott Hotel in Cebu City. The forum aims to set the direction for IT development in the province.

Roxas said the DTI had been talking to potential IT investors about making Cebu their next investment location after Metro Manila.

"From our feedback, they were all satisfied with the resources available. This is the reason why we have made Cebu as the next venue for our forum, so that all the industry stakeholders will fully grasp and develop the province's IT potential," he said.

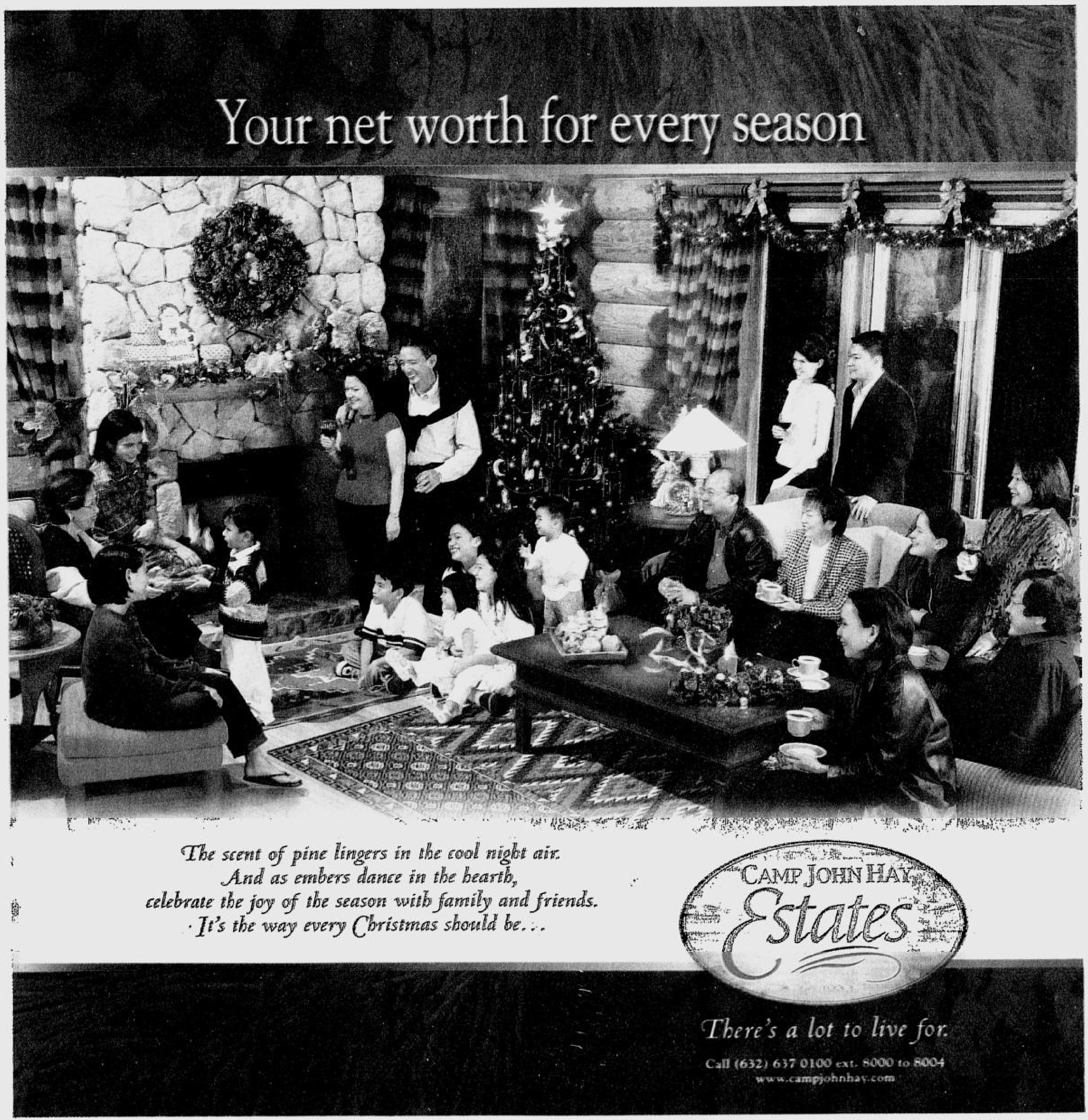
He said many IT and IT-related firms had visited Cebu to look at what the province had to offer as an investment location.

Representatives of these firms had likewise met with the various Cebu local government units, industry players and members of the academe, he added.

With more IT service providers expected to make Cebu a base of operations, he said around 35,000 new jobs would be generated.

Interested investors come from sectors such as contact center, business process outsourcing, animation, software development, engineering design and data transcription.

Companies that have already decided to locate their offices in the region include Sykes, PeopleSupport, Teradyne, Page Computers, Bigfoot Global Solutions and 88 Floor Gift Inc.


Your net worth for every season

The scent of pine lingers in the cool night air.
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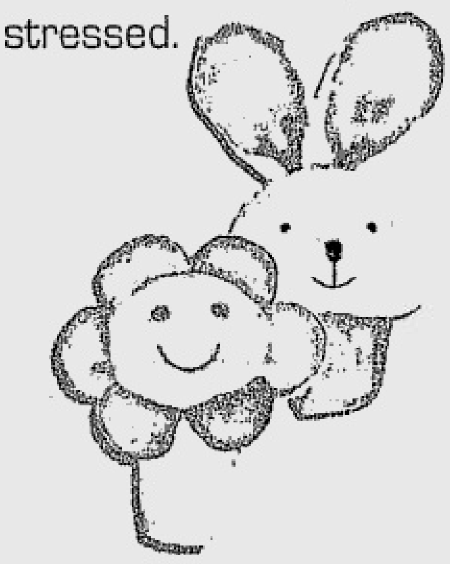
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Chief of Correspondents
Pam Pastor

Surviving Christmas 101

Are you ready for the holidays? No? Still haven't started on your Christmas shopping? Fear not.

This week, 2bU! has come up with a comprehensive guide to help you prepare for Christmas: gift ideas for everyone you love, presents to stay away from, how to make money for shopping, how to make gifts if your budget is teeny and you're feeling extra-creative, alterna-trees and ornaments to jazz up your homes, even recipes for goodies you can whip up for your friends and family.

All these, because it's the season to be merry—not stressed.



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Of all the places you must come to see this Christmas, one you can't afford to miss is Eastwood City. Visit the homes that showcase a lifestyle like no other in the city, from One Orchard Road to The Grand Eastwood Palazzo to Eastwood Parkview. Homes that raise city living to a whole new level of luxury and ease, with great dining, shopping and entertainment always at your fingertips. And this Christmas, Eastwood City offers more attractions and more fun for every member of the family. Come celebrate the holidays here at Eastwood City. We won't be surprised if you choose to make it your home.

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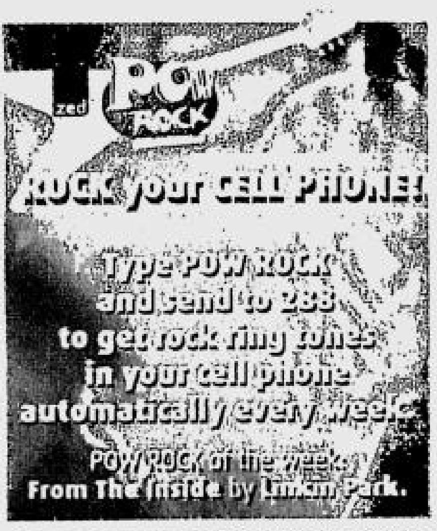
LOGO 2ANGELS 2	LOGO LASSEXY 12
LOGO LOVE 3	LOGO MRSUAVE 13
LOGO LUVSIGN 4	LOGO RACECARS 14
LOGO LUVROSE 5	LOGO INLUVWU1 15
LOGO DOLFINS 6	LOGO ANGELGIRL 16
LOGO DRAGON8 7	LOGO CUTEWORD 17
LOGO DRAGON7 8	LOGO ANGELDEV 18
LOGO FRENCH 9	LOGO BEACHKISS1 19
LOGO 2HARTS 10	LOGO MRSUAVE1 20

1 Mr. Suave *Parokya Ni Edgar* **TONE MRSUAVE**	**11** Perfect *True Faith* **TONE PERFECT**
2 Spaghetti Song *Sexbomb* **TONE SPAG**	**12** Bakit Ka Iiyak *Jeremiah* **TONE BAKITIYAK**
3 I'll Be *Edwin McCain* **TONE IBE**	**13** Have a Little Faith In Me *Mandy Moore* **TONE FAITHIN**
4 Where Is The Love *Black Eyed Peas* **TONE WERISLUV**	**14** Shake Ya Tailfeather *Nelly & P. Diddy* **TONE TAILF**
5 Kanlungan *Noel Cabangon* **TONE KANLUNGAN**	**15** Get Busy *Sean Paul* **TONE GETBUSY**
6 Boys Don't Cry *Plumb* **TONE BOYSDONT**	**16** Build Me Up, Buttercup *Sound Alike* **TONE BUTTERCUP**
7 Unwell *Matchbox 20* **TONE UNWELL**	**17** Broken Vow *Lara Fabian* **TONE BROKEN**
8 Mr. Suave Ver. 2 *Parokya Ni Edgar* **TONE MRSUAVE2**	**18** Ignition *R. Kelly* **TONE IGNI**
9 Maybe *Enrique Iglesias* **TONE MAYBE**	**19** Baby I Love You *Jennifer Lopez* **TONE BABYLOVE**
10 Numb *Linkin Park* **TONE NUMB**	**20** Happy *The Rolling Stones* **TONE HAPPY**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POW ROCK of the week: From The Inside by Linkin Park.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit # 4864, Series of 2003.

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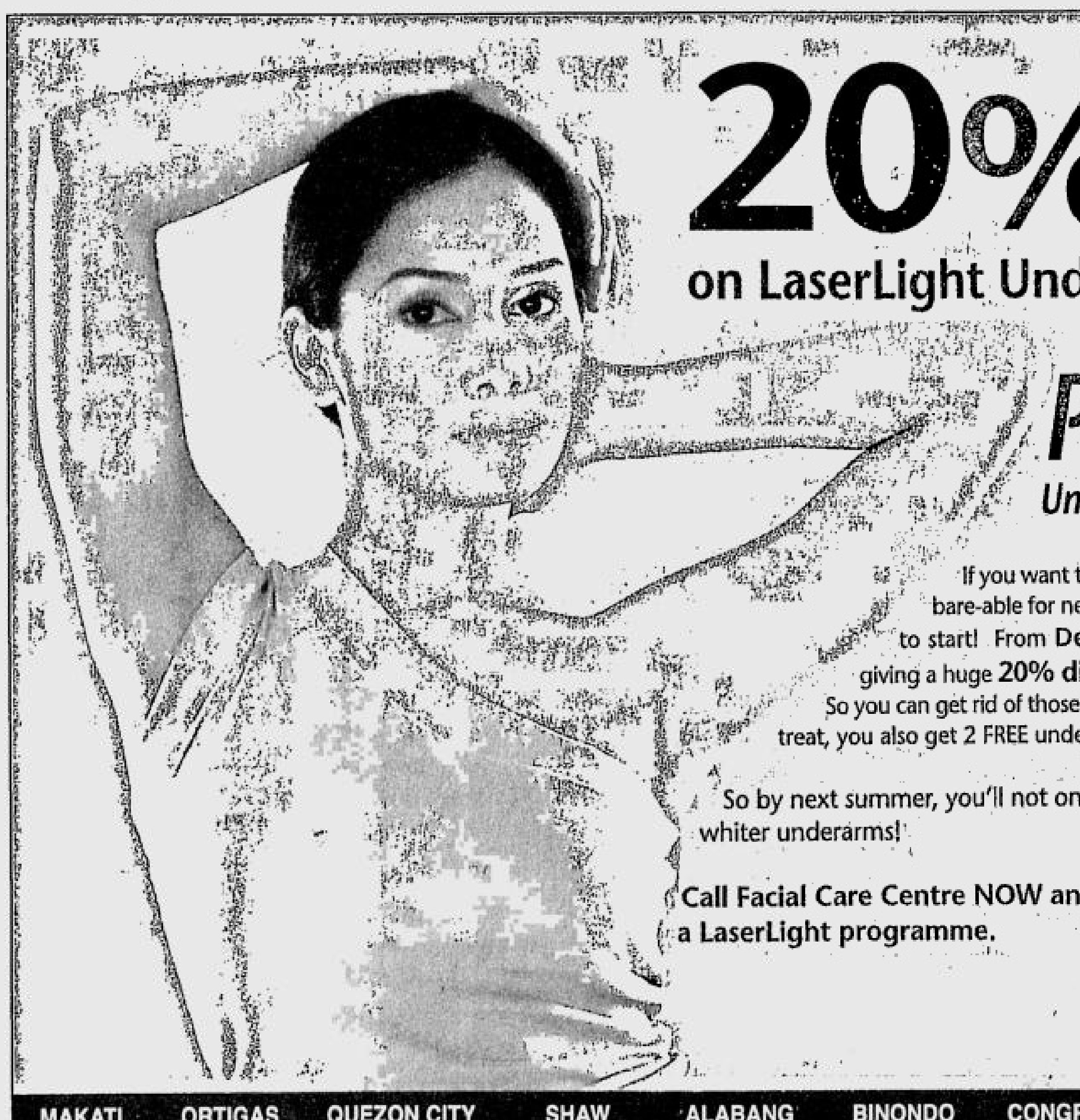
20% OFF
on LaserLight Underarm Hair Removal
PLUS 2 Free
Underarm Whitening Treatments

If you want to have satin-smooth, hair-free skin that's totally bare-able for next year's summer...then this is the perfect time to start! From **December 5-13, 2003**, Facial Care Centre is giving a huge **20% discount** on LaserLight underarm programme. So you can get rid of those unsightly, unwanted hair. And as an additional treat, you also get 2 FREE underarm whitening treatments upon enrollment!

So by next summer, you'll not only be hair-free...you'll also have smoother, whiter underarms!

Call Facial Care Centre NOW and enroll for a LaserLight programme.

Facial care centre

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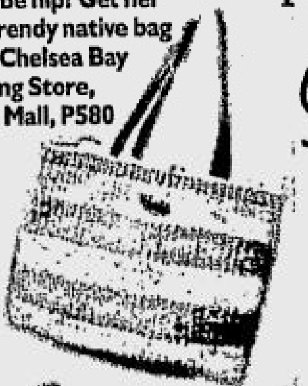
815 3121	687 2197	372 6634	717 0076	809 9583	243 8602	920 7992	860 2663/64	233 7633/35

OPENING HOURS. MON-FRI: 8:00AM-7:00PM SATURDAY: 8:00AM-5:00PM
Per DTI-NCR Permit #4972, Series of 2003.

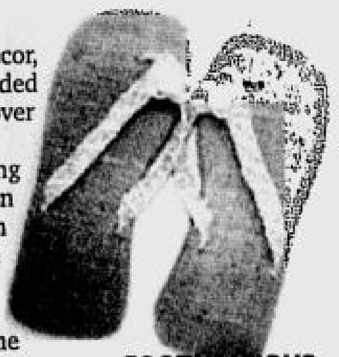
FOR MOM

Gifts for a special woman

Text and photos by Samantha Ang
2bU! Correspondent


WHO says mothers can't be hip? Get her this trendy native bag from Chelsea Bay Trading Store, Virra Mall, P580

FOR the chilly season, this pretty yellow shawl from Chelsea Bay Trading, P250


FOOT-Y-LICIOUS. Comfy flip-flops from Stall G13, Virra Mall Bangketa, P180

SPARKLING lights, festive décor, Christmas songs, over-crowded malls, *tiangges* sprouting all over the city like mushrooms.

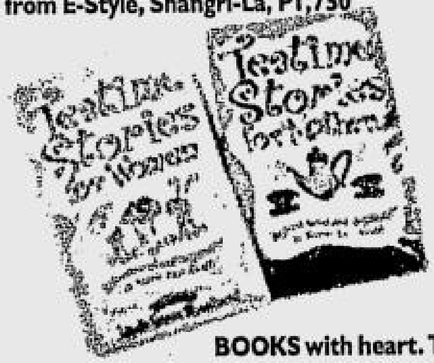
Yep, it's the season of giving once again. It's also the season of headaches, especially when thinking about what to give your loved ones for Christmas. I'm sure many of you are tired of giving the same presents every year, specially to people who are always on your Christmas list like your mother.

True, mothers always seem to appreciate every gift they receive, from crude handmade Christmas cards to a very expensive car, as long as it comes from their children. After all, as th]e old song goes: "No greater gift is there than love… "

But for us, it simply isn't enough that we give them just anything. It has to be special. It has to be heartfelt. It has to be for Mom.

Here are some unique gifts that you can give that exceptional woman in your life.

GIVE mom an album for storing her precious memories. Silk scrapbook from E-Style, Shangri-La, P1,750


BOOKS with heart. Teatime Stories for Women, P275; Teatime Stories for Mothers, P295, National Bookstore

GO aromatherapy with this teapot-shaped holder from Mamiden's, Virra Mall Bangketa, P150

"YOU Light Up My Life." There's no better way to express this than with this beaded lamp from Area Home Store, P1,898

FOR DAD

Stretch the peso and your imagination, too

Text and photos by Tiffany Limsico
2bU! Correspondent

NO, not another drab necktie with even duller pinstripes. Nor another pastel-colored oxford shirt for work.

And forget about those generic gifts you have been giving your father since you were old enough to buy him something: handkerchiefs, cufflinks, "#1 Dad in the World" coffee mug. Certainly not one more self-help book on the secret to becoming a gazillionaire.

This year, when you shop for the most important man in your life, don't just stretch the peso, but also your imagination.

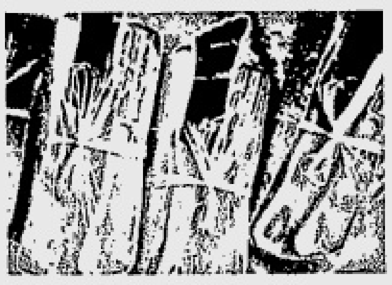
I saw some great items at the recent Heaven Sent Bazaar at the Manila Polo Club.

It may take a bit of effort to contact the retailers but most of them are bazaar regulars so you can simply ask them where you are likely to find them this holiday season.

Below P150

Gift sets for P100-P120 (buy one take one) in baskets are a steal. You can choose from an array of items, although something quite unconventional for your dad will be a foot-pampering set. It includes all those tools to get rid of stubborn corns and calluses. Since it's buy one, take one, you and a friend can actually split the bill.

Call Select and Collect at 0918-7741334.


FOOT-PAMPERING Kit, P120 for two

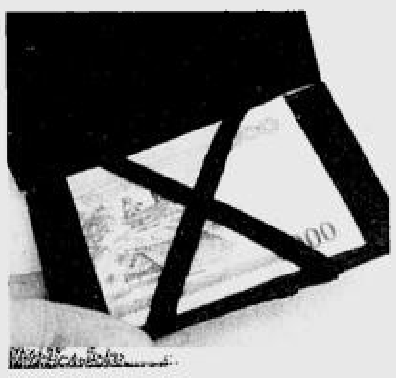
Less than P300

The Magic Wallet, for only P150.

You have to see what this wallet does to believe it. Insert a folded bill between the flaps, close the wallet then open it from the other side.

Voila! Your folded bill will have "disappeared," safely tucked inside the crisscrossed straps.

The black vinyl wallet contains more than enough pockets for cards and is slim enough to never cause a bulge in the pocket.


THE MAGIC Wallet, P150

Call Makers Manila at 0917-5276726 or e-mail makersmanila @yahoo.com.

Less than P500

A foldable chair to take everywhere, available in red and blue P399.

This is for dads who are sports fans or athletes. Or he can lug it to the beach or when he goes to camp.

Or he can use for lounging around his own lawn with a cold beer in hand on a Sunday afternoon.

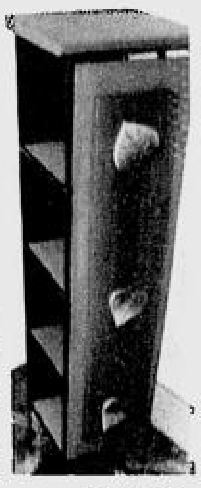
Call Futbol atbp. at 8069081, 0917-6188543.

Less than P1,000

A CD tower or CD chest that's fit to be shown off to neighbors, P600.

Whether you get a tower or a chest, you can be sure even your mom will love it, because it will go well with the rest of the furniture. The CD tower has lovely ornate metal accents on the sides while the CD chest can also hold heirloom pieces, in addition to CDs.

Call West Triangle Corp. at 8311704 or e-mail aspec@mozcom.com


CD tower of power, P600

And if you have a lot more time on your hands:

Head to the nearest hardware store such as Ace Hardware in Megamall or The Handy Man in Robinsons Galleria and assemble an entire toolbox for your dad. Pick one of those empty plastic or metal toolboxes and stuff it as much as your budget permits.

Whether it's another screwdriver or monkey wrench, I am sure most dads will find it useful at some point in time.

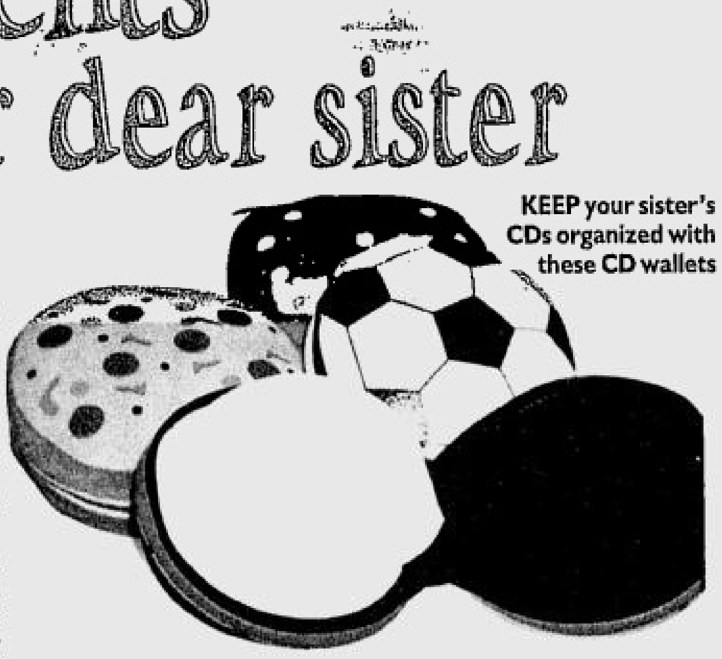
Pamper a workaholic father by stocking up on foot scrub and lotion or, better yet, get him one of those foot spas for P999 in most department stores.

On Christmas day, why don't you give him the full foot massage yourself? Surely any dad will be more than grateful for an hour or so of relaxation for those tired soles.

If you are flat broke, there are the old-fashioned "labors of love" that are always welcome: breakfast on Christmas morning that you make yourself, a heartfelt letter of appreciation, a walk to the park with good conversation just before night falls.

Presents for dear sister

Text and photos by Francine Palines
Contributor


KEEP your sister's CDs organized with these CD wallets

IT'S that time of year again to give gifts to the person who has always been there for you, who advises, loves and nags you to death—your sister.

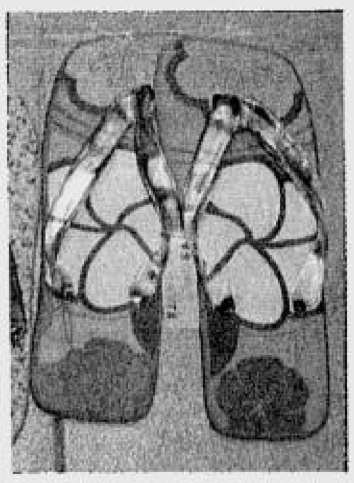
Although for the rest of the year you'd rather annoy the hell out of her, why not take this time to show her you actually appreciate the role she plays in your life?

Give her something that would really make her happy. Here are some suggestions:

P100 and below

Flip-flops. Make your sister smile with these cute flip-flops. They put an even bigger smile on your face with all the money you get to save, since they're priced at only P80. Funky Finds, East Wing of Robinson's Galleria.

Shot glasses. Thirsty? Shot glasses make a great gift for the sister who loves partying and going out. She doesn't need to be a drinking buddy to love these collectible items.

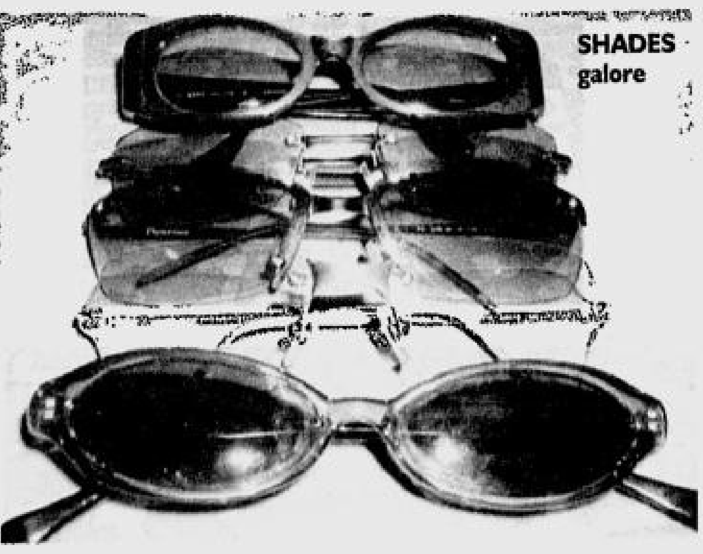

CUTE flip-flops

Less than P300

CD wallet. Keep your sister's CDs organized by getting her a CD wallet that suits her color preference and personality. P195-P295, Funky Finds, East Wing of Robinson's Galleria

Bakya shoes. Shoes not only act as great substitute for a best friend, they can also be very fun and playful. Get the Geisha look with these Jap-style *bakya* shoes, found in Greenhills. It comes in a variety of colors and can be worn comfortably at home or at work.

Shades. Keep your sis' eyes from glaring and looking suspicious every time she sees you by getting her a pair of cheap but chic sunglasses found in many clothing stores and stalls.


SHADES galore

Less than P500

Pampering kit. Return the many favors your sister gave you by getting her a pampering kit worth around 500 bucks, found in department stores and beauty and personal care shops.

Vanity case. This plush vanity case will surely get all of your sister's trinkets and other stuff neatly arranged and organized. P375-P475 in Greenhills stalls.

P1000 and above

Magazine subscription. A subscription of her favorite magazine is a surefire way of reminding your sister what a great sibling you are—12 months of the year.

Bags. Bags are more than just great accessories for girls; they serve a purpose too, being home to a lot of junk that makes a girl's daily life bearable. Classy and versatile Bowler bags are "in" right now and can be seen in stores like Adidas, Bayo, Guess and Mango, to name a few. You won't miss the thick leather, curved shape and thick short straps that hang above them.

Pens. These pens are not your average black/blue school ballpoints. They are much more sophisticated and are therefore pricier. The great ones, such as Montblanc, Aurora and Parker, pay back in quality and elegance what you fork over in cold hard cash.

Shopping for brother

Text and photos by Kristine Ching
2bU! Correspondent

IT'S a fact of life that it is hard to find gifts for boys. But you know what they say—nothing is impossible. Just give yourself enough time to comb the malls or the *tiangge* and for sure you'll find something to pique the persnickety attention of your kid brother.

But first things first: What kind of a shopper are you? This would largely determine the kind of gifts you'd end up with.

'Tamad' shopper

A lot of stores like Bench and Penshoppe have pre-packaged gifts all wrapped up, so that saves you precious time and effort. Just grab the packs, pay for them and you've got yourself a gift.

National Bookstore is offering good bargains, like the Fabel Castell package which contains an HB pencil and a pack of metallic pencils, all for P50.

Lush also has bathroom gifts for men. Check out which one your brother would like for his usual no-fuss bathing rituals.

Pages For Your Thoughts makes unique blank books, but they're not available in most bazaars. The covers are made from handmade paper, PVC leather, vinyl (the same material used for wall coverings, so they're really durable), Japanese paper and fabrics. Available at P80-P120 for the smaller ones (4"x4") and P280-P340 for the larger ones (5.5"x8.5") Call 0920-9052509 for orders.

Weekend shopper

If you have time to shop for gifts but do not have the patience to check each and every store for something unique, the mall is always a good place to be. For instance, there are always the reliable gift shops like Blue Magic, Humor Post and Egg at SM Megamall.

Humor Post sells cute character photo frame key chains for P100 each, and with a choice of different characters. If your brother looks nothing like Tom Welling, console him with the Superman kind.

The camouflage clip-bag from CYP (G/F Greenhills Theater Mall) can fit a guy's mobile phone, money and other small junk stuff. It costs P250 and comes in different colors.

You can also get him lots of Ragnarok prepaid cards, if he's into the game. Greenhills is a good destination to hunt for these cards.

Bargain shopper

You cannot afford all those designer perfumes, but you do not want to give an obviously fake copy as well.

Well then, head off to the bazaars, where you can find export-quality items at prices much lower than those found in the brands' flagship stores. Check out the papers for announcement of upcoming bazaars; they're sprouting all over now that it's December.

Dyed-in-the-wool shopper

If you're one of those who wouldn't mind braving human traffic to find the gifts you want, and who are skilled enough to spot their choices while dodging the snaky hands of pickpockets, then it's either Greenhills or Divisoria for you.

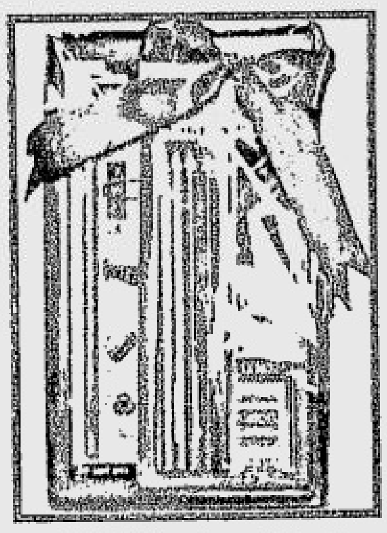
A *tiangge* stall in Greenhills sells yin-yang soaps (the black part smells like chocolate, the white part smells like vanilla). For P100, you get three pieces. Fruit soaps sell at P100 for four pieces.

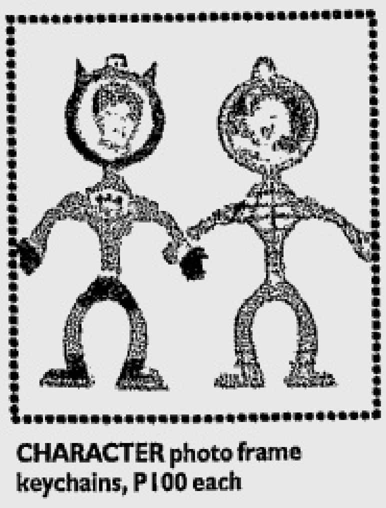
Why soap? Because you get to tell your brother he stinks, while he thinks you're being sweet and thoughtful.

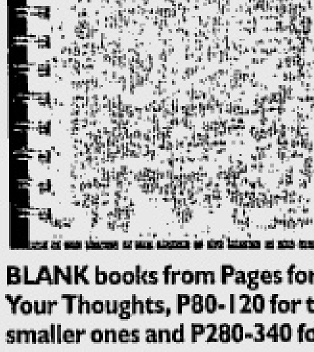
The hamburger CD case would cost around P300 in Rockwell, P200 in Greenhills and P100 in Divisoria. Naturally, a true shopper would opt for the last.

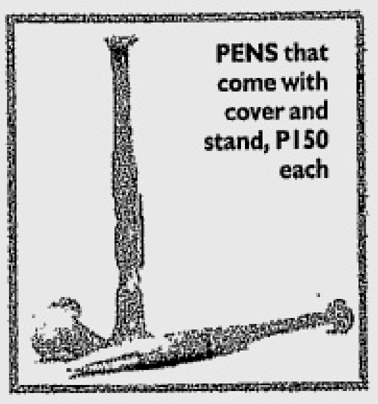
E-mail the author at xlady_ivoryx@yahoo.co.uk

SWEET-SMELLING yin-yang soaps, three for P100


A PACKAGE for the artist in him, P50


CHARACTER photo frame keychains, P100 each

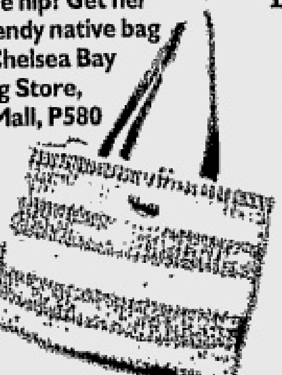

BLANK books from Pages for Your Thoughts, P80-120 for the smaller ones and P280-340 for the larger ones


PENS that come with cover and stand, P150 each

FOR MOM

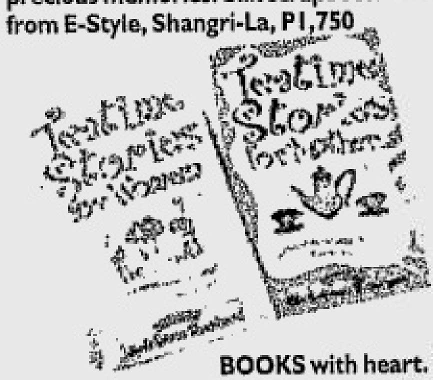
Gifts for a special woman

Text and photos by Samantha Ang
2bU! Correspondent


WHO says mothers can't be hip? Get her this trendy native bag from Chelsea Bay Trading Store, Virra Mall, P580

FOR the chilly season, this pretty yellow shawl from Chelsea Bay Trading, P250

GIVE mo[illegible] album for storing her precious memories. Silk scrapbook from E-Style, Shangri-La, P1,750


BOOKS with heart. Teatime Stories for Women, P275; Teatime Stories for Mothers, P295, National Bookstore

SPARKLING lights, festive décor, Christmas songs, over-crowded malls, *tiangges* sprouting all over the city like mushrooms.

Yep, it's the season of giving once again. It's also the season of headaches, especially when thinking about what to give your loved ones for Christmas. I'm sure many of you are tired of giving the same presents every year, specially to people who are always on your Christmas list like your mother.

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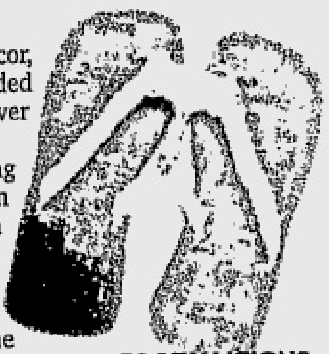
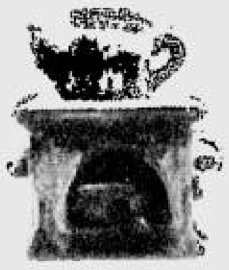

FOOT-Y-LICIOUS. Comfy flip-flops from Stall G13, Virra Mall Bangketa, P180


GO aromatherapy with this teapot-shaped holder from Mamiden's, Virra Mall Bangketa, P150

"YOU Light Up My Life." There's no better way to express this than with this beaded lamp from Area Home Store, P1,898

FOR DAD

Stretch the peso and your imagination, too

Text and photos by Tiffany Limsico
2bU! Correspondent

NO, not another drab necktie with even duller pinstripes. Nor another pastel-colored oxford shirt for work.

And forget about those generic gifts you have been giving your father since you were old enough to buy him something: handkerchiefs, cufflinks, "#1 Dad in the World" coffee mug. Certainly not one more self-help book on the secret to becoming a gazillionaire.

This year, when you shop for the most important man in your life, don't just stretch the peso, but also your imagination.

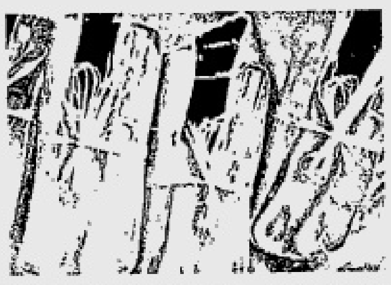
I saw some great items at the recent Heaven Sent Bazaar at the Manila Polo Club.

It may take a bit of effort to contact the retailers but most of them are bazaar regulars so you can simply ask them where you are likely to find them this holiday season.

Below P150

Gift sets for P100-P120 (buy one take one) in baskets are a steal. You can choose from an array of items, although something quite unconventional for your dad will be a foot-pampering set. It includes all those tools to get rid of stubborn corns and calluses. Since it's buy one, take one, you and a friend can actually split the bill.

Call Select and Collect at 0918-7741334.


FOOT-PAMPERING Kit, P120 for two

Less than P300

The Magic Wallet, for only P150.

You have to see what this wallet does to believe it. Insert a folded bill between the flaps, close the wallet then open it from the other side.

Voila! Your folded bill will have "disappeared," safely tucked inside the crisscrossed straps.

The black vinyl wallet contains more than enough pockets for cards and is slim enough to never cause a bulge in the pocket.

THE MAGIC Wallet, P150

Call Makers Manila at 0917-5276726 or e-mail makersmanila @yahoo.com.

Less than P500

A foldable chair to take everywhere, available in red and blue P399.

This is for dads who are sports fans or athletes. Or he can lug it to the beach or when he goes to camp.

Or he can use for lounging around his own lawn with a cold beer in hand on a Sunday afternoon.

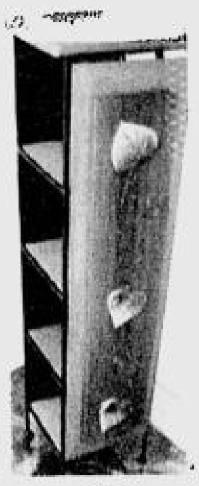
Call Futbol atbp. at 8069081, 0917-6188543.

Less than P1,000

A CD tower or CD chest that's fit to be shown off to neighbors, P600.

Whether you get a tower or a chest, you can be sure even your mom will love it, because it will go well with the rest of the furniture. The CD tower has lovely ornate metal accents on the sides while the CD chest can also hold heirloom pieces, in addition to CDs.

Call West Triangle Corp. at 8311704 or e-mail aspec@mozcom.com


CD tower of power, P600

And if you have a lot more time on your hands:

Head to the nearest hardware store such as Ace Hardware in Megamall or The Handy Man in Robinsons Galleria and assemble an entire toolbox for your dad. Pick one of those empty plastic or metal toolboxes and stuff it as much as your budget permits.

Whether it's another screwdriver or monkey wrench, I am sure most dads will find it useful at some point in time.

Pamper a workaholic father by stocking up on foot scrub and lotion or, better yet, get him one of those foot spas for P999 in most department stores.

On Christmas day, why don't you give him the full foot massage yourself? Surely any dad will be more than grateful for an hour or so of relaxation for those tired soles.

If you are flat broke, there are the old-fashioned "labors of love" that are always welcome: breakfast on Christmas morning that you make yourself, a heartfelt letter of appreciation, a walk to the park with good conversation just before night falls.

Presents for dear sister

Text and photos by Francine Palines
Contributor

KEEP your sister's CDs organized with these CD wallets

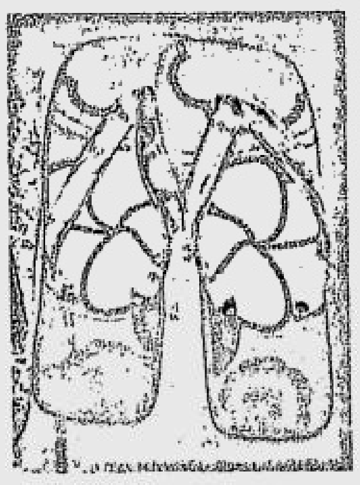
IT'S that time of year again to give gifts to the person who has always been there for you, who advises, loves and nags you to death—your sister.

Although for the rest of the year you'd rather annoy the hell out of her, why not take this time to show her you actually appreciate the role she plays in your life?

Give her something that would really make her happy. Here are some suggestions:

P100 and below

Flip-flops. Make your sister smile with these cute flip-flops. They put an even bigger smile on your face with all the money you get to save, since they're priced at only P80. Funky Finds, East Wing of Robinson's Galleria.


CUTE flip-flops

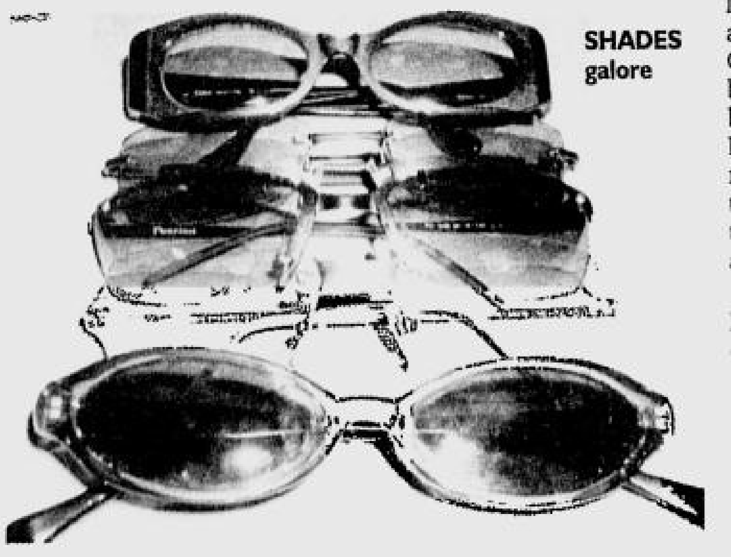
Shot glasses. Thirsty? Shot glasses make a great gift for the sister who loves partying and going out. She doesn't need to be a drinking buddy to love these collectible items.

Less than P300

CD wallet. Keep your sister's CDs organized by getting her a CD wallet that suits her color preference and personality. P195-P295, Funky Finds, East Wing of Robinson's Galleria

Bakya shoes. Shoes not only act as great substitute for a best friend, they can also be very fun and playful. Get the Geisha look with these Jap-style *bakya* shoes, found in Greenhills. It comes in a variety of colors and can be worn comfortably at home or at work.

Shades. Keep your sis' eyes from glaring and looking suspicious every time she sees you by getting her a pair of cheap but chic sunglasses found in many clothing stores and stalls.


SHADES galore

Less than P500

Pampering kit. Return the many favors your sister gave you by getting her a pampering kit worth around 500 bucks, found in department stores and beauty and personal care shops.

Vanity case. This plush vanity case will surely get all of your sister's trinkets and other stuff neatly arranged and organized. P375-P475 in Greenhills stalls.

P1000 and above

Magazine subscription. A subscription of her favorite magazine is a surefire way of reminding your sister what a great sibling you are—12 months of the year.

Bags. Bags are more than just great accessories for girls; they serve a purpose too, being home to a lot of junk that makes a girl's daily life bearable. Classy and versatile Bowler bags are "in" right now and can be seen in stores like Adidas, Bayo, Guess and Mango, to name a few. You won't miss the thick leather, curved shape and thick short straps that hang above them.

Pens. These pens are not your average black/blue school ballpoints. They are much more sophisticated and are therefore pricier. The great ones, such as Montblanc, Aurora and Parker, pay back in quality and elegance what you fork over in cold hard cash.

Shopping for brother

Text and photos by Kristine Ching
2bU! Correspondent

IT'S a fact of life that it is hard to find gifts for boys. But you know what they say—nothing is impossible. Just give yourself enough time to comb the malls or the *tiangge* and for sure you'll find something to pique the persnickety attention of your kid brother.

But first things first: What kind of a shopper are you? This would largely determine the kind of gifts you'd end up with.

'Tamad' shopper

A lot of stores like Bench and Penshoppe have pre-packaged gifts all wrapped up, so that saves you precious time and effort. Just grab the packs, pay for them and you've got yourself a gift.

National Bookstore is offering good bargains, like the Fabel Castell package which contains an HB pencil and a pack of metallic pencils, all for P50.

Lush also has bathroom gifts for men. Check out which one your brother would like for his usual no-fuss bathing rituals.

Pages For Your Thoughts makes unique blank books, but they're not available in most bazaars. The covers are made from handmade paper, PVC leather, vinyl (the same material used for wall coverings, so they're really durable), Japanese paper and fabrics. Available at P80-P120 for the smaller ones (4"x4") and P280-P340 for the larger ones (5.5"x8.5") Call 0920-9052509 for orders.

Weekend shopper

If you have time to shop for gifts but do not have the patience to check each and every store for something unique, the mall is always a good place to be. For instance, there are always the reliable gift shops like Blue Magic, Humor Post and Egg at SM Megamall.

Humor Post sells cute character photo frame key chains for P100 each, and with a choice of different characters. If your brother looks nothing like Tom Welling, console him with the Superman kind.

The camouflage clip-bag from CYP (G/F Greenhills Theater Mall) can fit a guy's mobile phone, money and other small junk stuff. It costs P250 and comes in different colors.

You can also get him lots of Ragnarok prepaid cards, if he's into the game. Greenhills is a good destination to hunt for these cards.

Bargain shopper

You cannot afford all those designer perfumes, but you do not want to give an obviously fake copy as well.

Well then, head off to the bazaars, where you can find export-quality items at prices much lower than those found in the brands' flagship stores. Check out the papers for announcement of upcoming bazaars; they're sprouting all over now that it's December.

Dyed-in-the-wool shopper

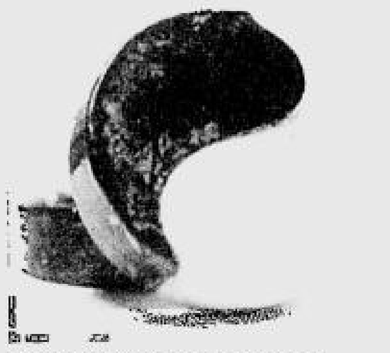
If you're one of those who wouldn't mind braving human traffic to find the gifts you want, and who are skilled enough to spot their choices while dodging the snaky hands of pickpockets, then it's either Greenhills or Divisoria for you.

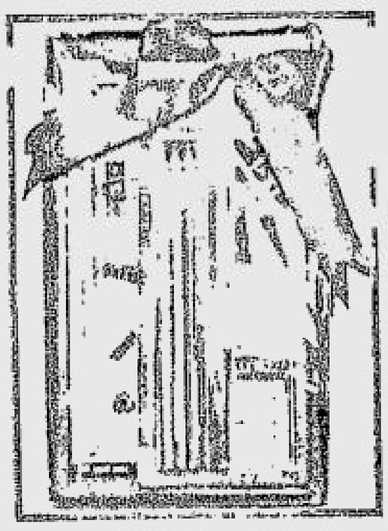
A *tiangge* stall in Greenhills sells yin-yang soaps (the black part smells like chocolate, the white part smells like vanilla). For P100, you get three pieces. Fruit soaps sell at P100 for four pieces.

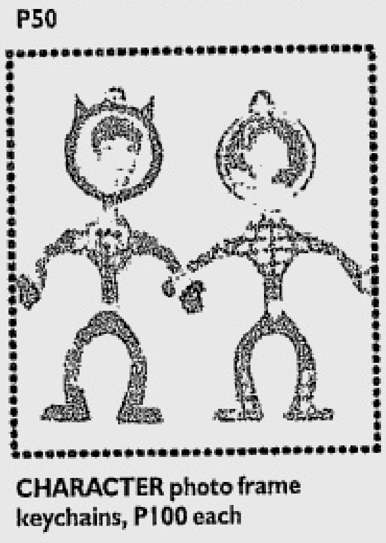
Why soap? Because you get to tell your brother he stinks, while he thinks you're being sweet and thoughtful.

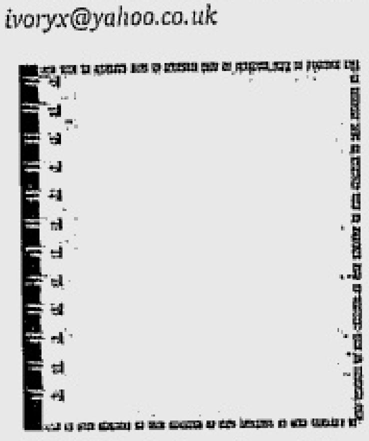
The hamburger CD case would cost around P300 in Rockwell, P200 in Greenhills and P100 in Divisoria. Naturally, a true shopper would opt for the last.

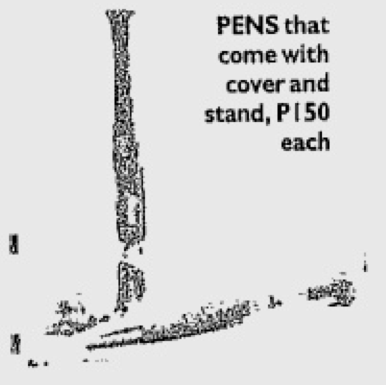
E-mail the author at xlady_ivoryx@yahoo.co.uk


SWEET-SMELLING yin-yang soaps, three for P100


A PACKAGE for the artist in him, P50

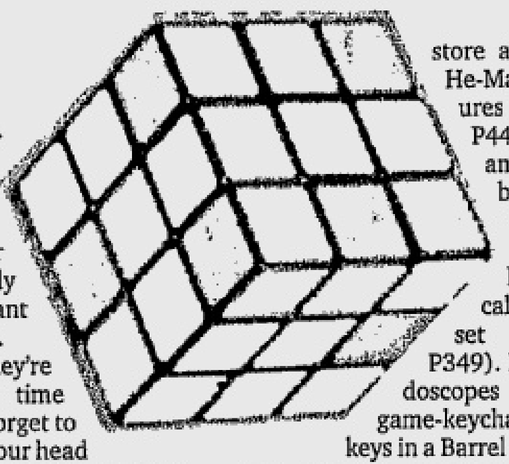

CHARACTER photo frame keychains, P100 each


BLANK books from Pages for Your Thoughts, P80-120 for the smaller ones and P280-340 for the larger ones


PENS that come with cover and stand, P150 each

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Perfect presents for our pals



By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

SPENDING time with our friends gives us an idea of what they want for Christmas. Whether it's because of quality time or major hinting, the key to really knowing the stuff they want and need is simply listening.

So go listen to what they're yakking about the next time you're together. And don't forget to listen to that little voice in your head when finally shopping for that precious gift. What it's whispering or screaming has got to be valuable.

Beauty and hygiene

Beauty and hygiene products are easy to find and almost always safe to give as presents. It's all a matter of knowing the recipient's needs and preferences.

For scents, Penshoppe has a long list of fragrances for both guys and girls. Its latest are Oasis (for guys) and Oceane (for girls). Both refreshing and not overpowering, Oasis smells like you've just taken a bath while Oceane is a cross between the sea and green tea. A bottle costs P149. Penshoppe also has Fruit Pouty Lip Jelly (P89) for a pair of sweet puckers.

Herbench offers Pretty When Pinched (P115) for that natural blush.

The SM Department Store has the Homedics Bubble Spa Luxury Foot Bubbler, which you can give your best bud if you're feeling a little generous this year.

And while we're on the subject of feet, you might want to check out the Body Shop's line of feet goodies. It has a pamper pack worth P400 that contains a bottle of foot lotion, two tubs of lemongrass exfoliant and a terra-cotta pumice.

Clothes and accessories

For the fashionista friend, boutiques are mushrooming all over, and their original goods are just too great to pass up.

For affordable yet fashionable specs and shades, i2i has the coolest designs and most pocket-friendly prices around.

Specialty store Mystic Circle has goodies for the weird ones. Its horny/spiky rubber wristbands cost P170 while its Emily the Strange and Jack Skellington wallets are priced P600 each.

Defect, on the other hand, has these cute little blue Astroboy purses worth P225.

For T-shirts with eye-catching visuals and text, Artwork has tees priced from P269.75 to P299.75. It also has a Che Guevarra slingbag at P250.

Spoofs Ltd. has a wide range of white shirts with hilarious logo spin-offs at P310 each.

Freeway offers funky star wristbands at P35 each. They're so good they're almost gone.

For the guys, Bench has striped bonnets in various colors (P189 each). It has cool basic sneakers as well (P599).

Home and décor

If your pal is an eternal homebody, he or she will welcome something to beautify his or her place. For cheap but cute options, check out Regalong Pambahay's ceramic chimes. Priced at P75 each, they come in various colors and shapes.

The store also offers chopsticks with different designs (two pairs for P185). It has beaded pillowcases, oriental containers, candle holders and journals. Its lamps are prized from P750 to P895.

The SM Department Store has character blankets (printed fleece throw) now marked down to P299.75 for the kid at heart. It has Powerpuff Girls and Justice League prints for cartoon fans out there. The store also has Justice League mugs priced P69.75 and P99.75.

Now if you're really into mugs, Spoofs Ltd. has ones with its hilariously famous logos (P210 each).

Toys and trinkets

For your friend's playful side, you don't have to look far for that special gift. The toy stores definitely have what you need.

SM Department Store has Scrabble (P309.75), Boggle Word Factory (P234.75) and the Uno Stacko Game (P399.75). The store also has the new He-Man action toy figures (P99.75, P449.75, P599.75) and even the beloved Magic 8 Ball (P349.75).

Papemelroti has the Whimsical tic-tac-toe game set (P149, P298, P349). Hobbes has kaleidoscopes (P595) and fun game-keychains like the Monkeys in a Barrel (around P150).

The Museum Shop has various incense sticks (P35), among many nice stuff, and Defect has cool rubberized Emily the Strange keychains (P49).

Metaza can put your picture in its pendants for P250.

And Bio Research has lots of live stuff one can give out as gifts. A pair of Siberian Dwarf Hamsters costs P320 while a pair of Teddy Bear hamsters is only P100. It has a lot of cages you can choose from (P1,304 to P2,584.50).

Books and music

Looking for a gift for the book-lover or music-lover friend is easy as long as you know his or her faves.

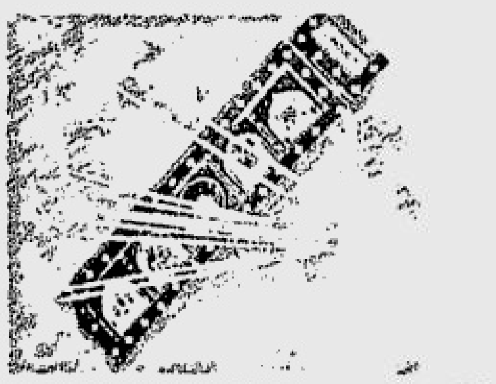
The Maksim CD is priced at around P500, and it comes with a VCD so the recipient can enjoy the visual Maksim as well.

Tower Records is also having its sale, with selected CDs down to P150 and cassettes to P30. Last time I checked, Tower Code Red's "Scarlet" and Jewel's "Spirit" were in the bin.

For the bookworm, the "Emily the Strange" picture book is a gem, Bob Ong's latest is entertaining, and if all else fails, a magazine subscription is always welcome.

Enjoy!

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com



The big *plus* in staying forever young

is Nestlé Calcium Plus.

It's rich in calcium to

keep my bones strong

and it has fiber to help me

absorb more nutrients.

You only have one body.

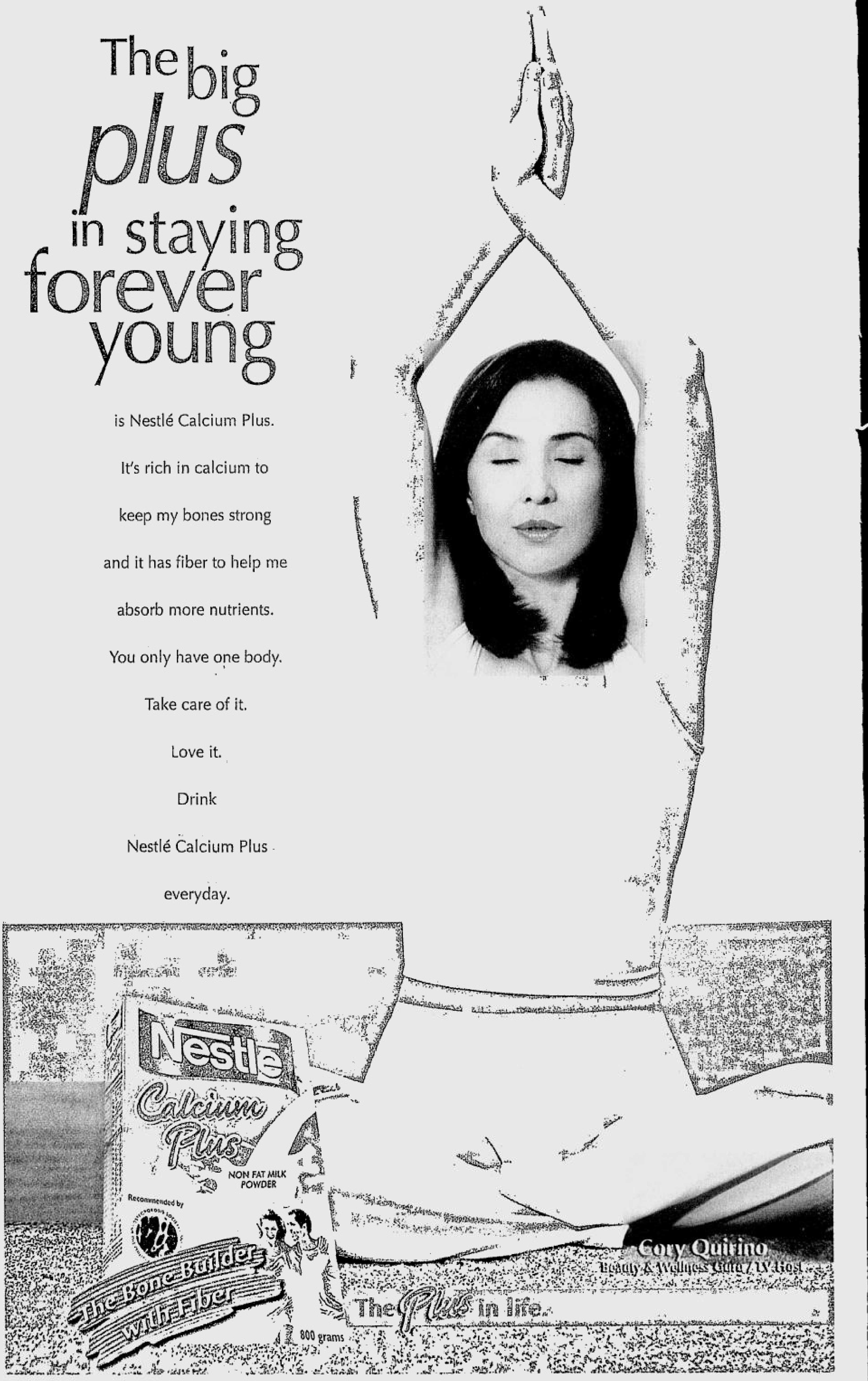
Take care of it.

Love it.

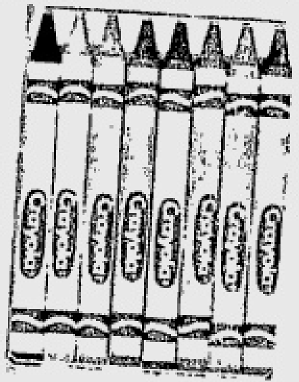
Drink

Nestlé Calcium Plus

everyday.



Gift-giving for kids



By Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

THEY are your younger siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews, godchildren and child-friends—children of friends, teachers and colleagues, as well as kids in the neighborhood. Can you make a quick count of the tykes in your life?

When it comes to presents, kids are easier to please than adults—in a way. Brands and labels hardly matter to them (or maybe this is true until they learn how to read the labels), as long as you give them something that is pleasing to their eyes and can keep them busy for at least an hour.

Generally, children love toys—almost any kind of toy. However, you probably don't want to give them just about any kind, but those which can help them in other ways. There are toys that can teach them new things or offer a more lasting form of entertainment.

On the other hand, they'd surely love something that would give them hours and hours of pure enjoyment.

Here are a few gift ideas and suggestions to help you pick the perfect Christmas gift for the kids in your life:

Musical instruments. Keyboards, drums, guitars and other musical instruments for kids can easily be found in department stores, or, if you have a limited budget, the *tiangge*.

Not only will you give them a source of fun and entertainment, you may also end up discovering and honing their latent musical skills.

Drawing boards. Ever noticed how kids love to doodle? Once they see you writing, they would curiously extend their arms to reach for your pen, and, once they have it, would scribble as if they knew what they were doing.

Children who have yet to learn to write can't wait to see what their hands can do. Let them doodle as long as they want. Just make sure you watch over them so they won't hurt themselves inadvertently. Even better, why don't you guide their hands in sketching recognizable characters?

Coloring books. There are a lot of coloring storybooks in bookstores, which means you have many options to choose from. Coloring books make great gifts, because kids learn color coordination and recognition from them, and at the same time enjoy bonding moments with you when you read the stories to them.

Bowling pins. Encourage your young wards to enjoy sports early on. Kids will also have more fun if they share their toys with their friends.

Bowling pins are a nice gift, because while it's sometimes hard for children to let other kids play with their dolls and robots, they probably wouldn't mind sharing their bowling pins and watching other kids roll a ball to hit them.

Picture puzzles. Puzzles help develop logical thinking, patience and concentration in young people. Choose a puzzle that's appropriate to the age of the kids. Let them stare at the full picture and guide them to form the pieces until they can do it on their own.

A superhero costume. A full regalia may prove to be expensive, but what about bringing the children to the mall and letting them pose for pictures wearing these costumes? These can be a source of lifetime entertainment and great memories.

Bags, caps and accessories. Kids just love to be dressed up. They can't get enough of bags, caps and accessories, so make them happy with something that's along their alley, like a bag featuring their favorite superhero or cartoon character.

Stuffed toys. Some kids are inclined to just ogle at stuffed toys for a few seconds, and leave them alone later. There are others who just can't sleep without their favorite stuffed toy joining them in bed.

However, you certainly can make kids appreciate your gift if you preface it with something like, "Whenever you let this toy (give it a name) sleep beside you, Ninang (or Ninong) will feel that she is beside you, too."

Older kids

Now, when it comes to older kids (six years and up), you'd have a fairly easier time because they often have a more definite idea of what they want.

You'll hear requests for yo-yo, yugi-oh cards, dinosaurs, cars, Play Station, doll house, etc. Do ask them, so at least you have a clear idea of what to buy for them. But phrase it in such a way that you come off as just being "curious" about what they want. That way, you won't end up making promises, as everything, of course, will ultimately depend on your budget.

Besides, you certainly don't want to disappoint a kid you love.

Yup, they're not just easy to please, they're also grateful creatures who will remember fondly, and for a long time, that you exerted effort to make them happy and feel extra-special on Christmas day.

E-mail the author at bluegrayhue@hotmail.com

For little bundles of joy

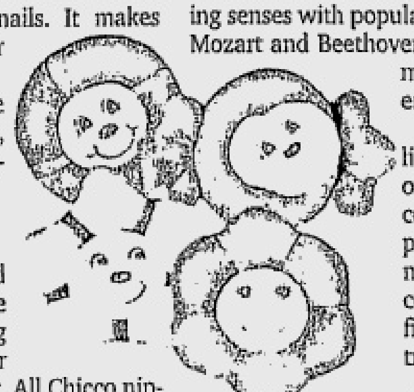
By Alora Mae U. Guerrero
2bU! Correspondent

IN a country where gift-giving is *de rigueur*, you are expected to buy things for every person you know——your family, your friends, your boss, your colleague's son, your neighbor's twins. 2bU! has drawn up a list of products you may want to give to babies.

Gifts under P100

Why not buy The First Years' baby nail clipper? Its curved cutting edge is perfect for trimming a baby's delicate fingernails. It makes grooming time less stressful for everyone.

Tops, bottoms and socks are also available for less than P100, too. Disney tie-sides, for example, cost about P60.



P100 to P500

Nipples, bottles, teethers and drying racks are in this price range. Chicco's angled feeding bottles ensure that their "mouths" are always full of milk. All Chicco nipples—silicon and rubber—also have an anti-hiccup feature, reducing the incidence of colic in infants.

But if you don't want to spend more than P250 for a baby product, then just get Chicco's anti-hiccup teats. For P110, you'll get two naturally shaped silicone nipples for babies who have not yet cut their first teeth.

For teethers, snap up a Pigeon cooling teether. Its unique shape is ideal for teething and natural development. The teether, with an easy-to-hold handle, is filled with sterilized water and is completely safe.

To keep bottles and accessories organized, grab Safety First's fold-up bottle drying rack for P400. The sturdy plastic tray, which folds flat for storage, comes with a storage basket that can be placed into the dishwasher.

Check out Tee-Zed's Dream Baby bottle griprattles, wrist rattles and pacifier holders priced at about P150.

Baby Genius' collection of CDs is also good value for money. The Best of the IQ Builder album, for example, will inspire little minds with enchanting compositions. It contains the best of the Baby Genius music library—Mozart, Vivaldi, Bach, Beethoven and Handl.

P501 to P1,000

With a P900 tag price, Basic Comfort's Pack-N-Ride Hip Carrier is affordable and of good quality. The platform includes a utility bin for bottles, diapers, wipes and other accessories.

The Oliebollen Symphony-in-Motion Mobile is another great gift idea. It combines a multitude of movements to stimulate baby's developing senses with popular classical music by Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. Colorful animals in the mobile move in four different ways.

Carter's Sage Crib Sheet, like the fitted cotton sheet, offers the ultimate in crib comfort. With extra-deep pockets and reinforced corners, the ultra-soft, combed-cotton sheet will fit 28 x 52-inch crib mattresses and toddler beds.

Over P1,000

If money is no object, you might want to buy Graco's Quattro Tour travel system at about P10,000. It combines function, style and convenience to keep the baby happy and comfortable. The three-piece set includes a sturdy aluminum frame stroller, a SnugRide infant car seat, and an adjustable stay-in-car base.

The First Years' Four-Stage Bath System costs P1,500. Designed with safety, convenience, and extended use in mind, the one-of-a-kind bathing combo can be used from a child's first bath until his weight reaches 25 pounds.

The Kookazoo Tunnel Gym from Kids II features multiple brightly colored toys including soft triangle with squeaker, soft cube that jingles, and a hard ring rattle. It can be a crawl mat or a tunnel gym. Price is P2,200.

The Avent Express Six Bottle Steam Machine is larger, faster, and styled to blend with the most stylish kitchen. Using the hospital method, it sterilizes baby feeding items in under nine minutes. Just add a little water and switch on.

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ELECTRONIC USE ONLY
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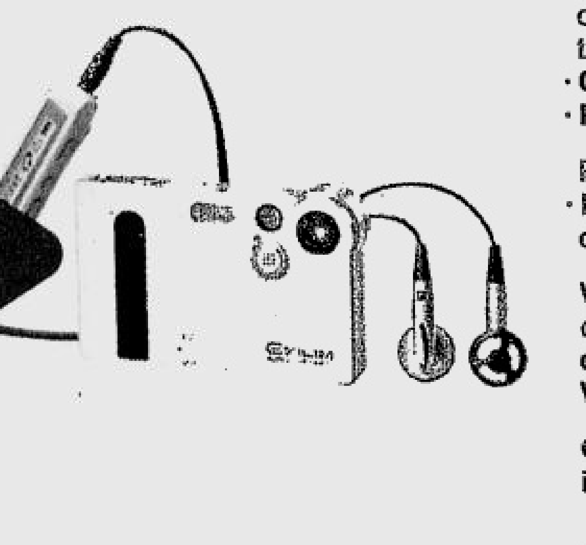
GET A CHANCE TO WIN A CASIO DIGICAM WITH MP3 FUNCTION IN THE MTV DEBIT CARD RAFFLE DRAW



From November 14, 2003 to February 29. 2004, each MTV Debit or Prepaid Card you get gives you a chance* to win any the following.
- **Casio EX-M2 Digital Camera with MP3 function**, or
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4556, Series of 2003

HAPPY EARNER. By tending to her garage shop, Kat earns a thousand a day!

Hold a garage sale, get a market stall, bake goodies, wrap gifts for a fee

How to make money for Christmas shopping

By Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

IF YOU have wrapped up your Christmas gifts and set them under your Christmas tree, good for you! You're officially free from the hassle and stress of last-minute shopping in over-crowded malls.

But if you haven't bought any single gift and you don't even have enough moolah to spend for your dream presents, don't worry. That's not a reason for you to run to your parents and let them do the shopping again. 2bU! has prepared a number of tips on making money for Christmas gift shopping.

Garage sale

Kat Cruz, 18, earns about P1,000 a day by selling used clothing, toys, books and other items in a garage sale. She shares the income with her siblings who help her tend the bazaar. But her earnings are enough to buy her godchildren exciting Christmas presents.

Kat, her sisters, and their mom, thought of holding a garage sale when they noticed their cabinets were getting full of old stuff. Instead of just throwing away the old items, they thought of making money out of them.

"The letting-go part was hard because there's a lot of sentimental value in those items even if we have outgrown them or we don't use them anymore," Kat said. "But we thought that there could be other people who may find them useful, after all, the items are neat and still of good quality. So we just went on selling them."

Displayed in Kat's little garage shop are old books, slightly used signature clothing, stuffed toys, used pairs of shoes and sandals, home displays, and other items that people in their village may find irresistible and reasonably priced.

Kat advises, "Be patient and friendly to your customers. They are most likely your neighbors, so always be courteous and kind to them."

With her sweet face and amiable nature, no wonder Kat's garage shop has been a huge hit!

More suggestions

- **Ukay-ukay**

If you don't have a spacious garage, you may sell your old stuff in another place. In college, we used to raise funds by selling used clothing in the market. The key here is to find a strategic spot where mothers and kids can easily notice your items. You will have to pay for the space you will occupy, but you will recover it through your sales. Visit the market near your place.

- **Wrap-a-gift project**

If you can neatly wrap gifts in no time, then you may want to offer gift-wrapping service. Call your friends, *ninangs* and *ninongs* and relatives and offer them your service. You can charge as low as P30 to as much as P50 for the service.

- **Cookies and cakes**

Summon your baking skills! Make use of those extra lessons you learned in school. Search the Internet for more creative recipes and baking techniques to whip up delicious pastries and cakes, which consumers usually look for during Christmas. You may display a "baked goodies for sale" banner in your house, or call your friends to enlist their help in advertising your products. Deliver goodies on time and in style. The more creative you are, the more customers will love you.

- **Wedding singer/photographer**

Do not hide your beautiful voice. Or make use of your favorite camera. Use them to make money. A lot of wedding ceremonies take place in December, and although would-be brides and grooms must have planned their weddings months before, there may be last-minute changes that you can exploit. Whatever the case may be, just place your name out in the market.

Contact old friends. Be nosy. Ask around, "Who's marrying who?" and "Have they got it all covered?" People's contacts can do wonders in this case.

- **Web designer**

If you're the type who spends hours and hours creating personal web pages, why not make money out of your hobby?

Basic web design could make you earn at least P1,000 for each client.

- **Typist**

Students normally have projects and paper work for them to work on during Christmas break. If you can type 40 words per minute and you have a computer and printer in your house, tap into your contacts and offer your services to your friends, or ask them to help you find some clients. Computer shops charge about P20 per page, so you can charge within that range, too. But the price could go higher especially if there are graphs or charts included in a project.

E-mail the author at bluegrayhue@hotmail.com

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

ARNEE HIDALGO

Experience a musical high as the country's fast-rising R&B artist grooves at Robinsons Malls. Listen to the "True" sounds of Amee Hidalgo as she belts out cuts from her first album. Be there and be mesmerized by the voice that's unmistakably Amee.

[illegible]

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PROMO PERIOD: Dec. 1, 2003 to Mar. 31, 2004

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 3531, Series of 2003

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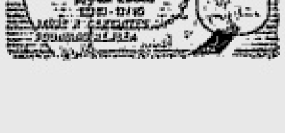


Gift ideas for girlfriends

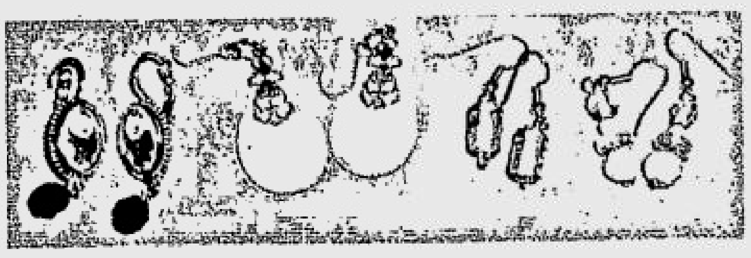
By Francine Palines
2bU! Correspondent

CHRISTMAS is fast approaching, and instead of going through the wonderfully decorated shops with ease and lightness like the next guy, you find yourself grumbling and muttering, unable to think of why—why of all people, did it have to be you who turned out to be the very clueless boyfriend this Christmas?

Well, worry no more because here are some cool gift ideas that can suit any budget (yes, even penny-pinching boyfriends are allowed to give great gifts) that can still retain that wonderful-boyfriend factor—no matter the cost.

But remember, boys, being frugal and proud of it is not always the best approach—girls want to be spent on, too, you know! So kindly remove all ideas of giving your girlfriend something under P15 (like those candies you picked out in the grocery) and treat her to something a bit more special this year.

Incorporate it with a bit of personal creativity and a lot of heart (like a poem perhaps?) and you've got yourself the perfect Christmas gift.

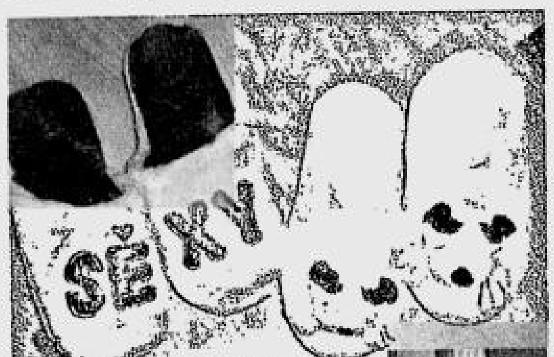


P100 and below

"Chandelier-ium." Although diamonds do not fall under the P100 budget, there are cheaper alternatives, like these dangling earrings. Fancy and fashionable, they're found in many stores and in different designs.

Bath buddy. This colorful rose confetti can turn a simple bubble bath into something a bit more special, helping her relax and enjoy her quality solo time. Funky Finds at the East Wing of Robinsons Galleria.

Tush-push. Snuggle up on the couch with these throw pillows priced at P100 and play couch-potato with your girlfriend the whole day.



P300

Plush ground. Comfort is the key to any good gift idea, so get her something like these awesome bedroom slippers, reminiscent of those pink bunny slippers she used to slip on as a child. They'll keep her feet snug and comfy, making her feel like they're in foot heaven.

Name drop. Show her how great she is by getting her an ultra-cool wristband with her name on it. Straps cost around P250 to P270—depending if it were made out of rubber or lizard material. Cost per letter is 20 pesos

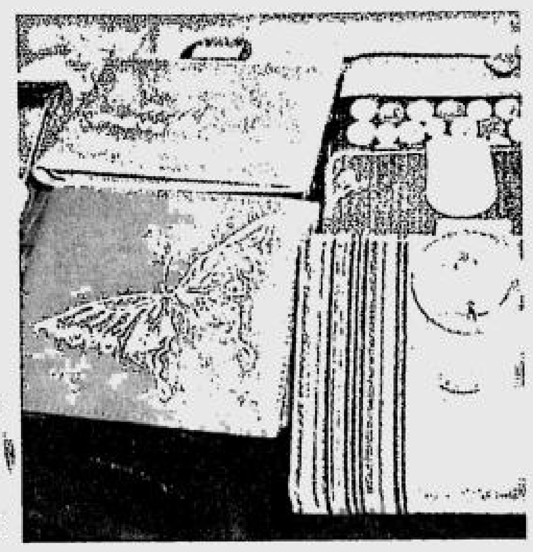
Bedazzled. Save her cell phone from scratches and dents by getting her a really great cell phone case that varies from material, designs and color. Most are usually found in bazaars and priced below P300.

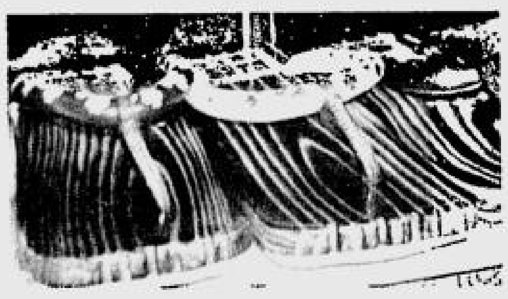
P500

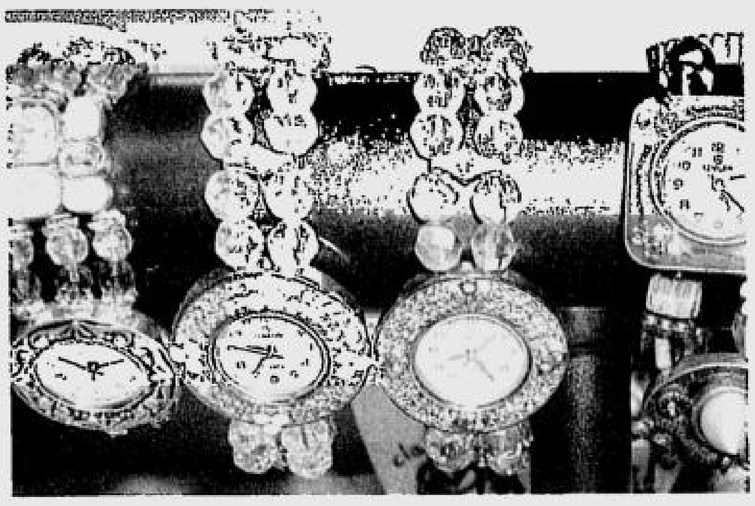
Mo' money. Wallets are a practical gift item for any person. Get your loved one something she'll love—like these funky, not to mention one-of-a-kind wallets, found in the Theatremall priced at around 495 bucks.

Woman on top. A new book? A spa treatment maybe? Gift vouchers and certificates are a great way to get your girlfriend something she wants while making the most of the budget.

THE ALCHEMIST
SOPHIE KINSELLA
Shopaholic Ties the Knot





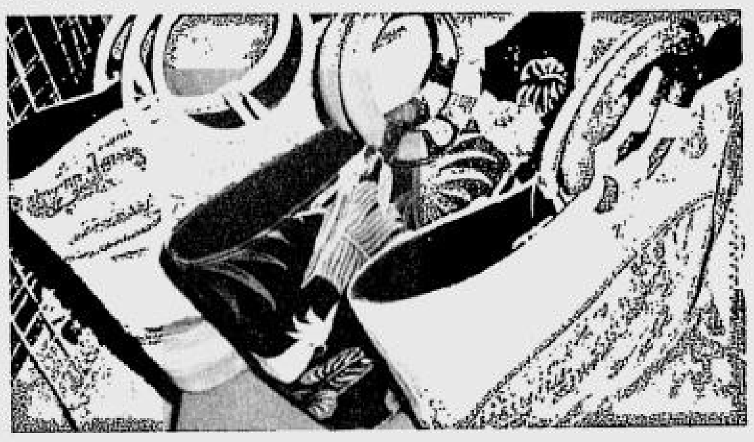


P1,000 and above

Bling bling. With a funky, stylish watch wrapped around her wrist, I doubt she'll ever be late for another date. Prices range from P1,500 and above. Classic Charmz located at the East Wing of Robinsons Galleria.

Cold no more. Keep her warm this December by getting her some comfy and stylish sweats. It comes in a variety of colors and designs (hood or no-hood?) and can be found in almost any clothing store.

Knock on wood. Since bags are the closest thing to a girl's best friend, get her someone new to meet. It's pretty unique from a lot of bags because of the round wooden handle that's easy on the grip, not to mention, eye-catching. These bags are priced at P750 and above in Greenhills.



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Boyfriend materials

By Katrina Anne Yap
2bU! Correspondent

FINDING gifts for boyfriends is a hard task. Guys generally spend their money on expensive items like cars and accessories, computers and gadgets, shoes, watches and gym equipment.

But you wouldn't want to burn a hole in your pocket by getting him the Game Boy SP (P6,000), Final Fantasy X-2 for PS2 (P3,000) or gym membership (P4,000). So here are alternative gift ideas.

P100 and below

Show him how sweet you are through Ferrero Rocher chocolates, whole roasted hazelnuts inside a wafer wrapped in milk chocolate and little bits of hazelnuts. The chocolates don't come cheap, but every bite is definitely worth it! Ferrero Rocher 3's cost P35. Also available in 5's (P57) and 30's (P397) at leading groceries and candy stores.

If your boyfriend prefers cakes or brownies, try sweets from different bazaars and *tiangges*. They're yummy and really cheap. Only P100 for any packs of three.

You may also want to get one of those sweet-smelling soaps tied with a rope so he can hang it on the shower head. P100. Contact Annomi Soapworks at 4566930 for orders.

If your guy loves his personal computer and enjoys downloading programs from the net, why not give him CD-Rs? They're cheap and practical. He can use it for MP3s, video files, pictures, and a lot of other things. P10 each at CD-R King.

P300 and above

Ultimate Frisbee is quickly becoming a popular sport in the Philippines. Even if your guy isn't into it yet, he may soon become interested. Give him an Adidas Ultimate Regulation Disc so he can start getting fit while having fun. Girls can also play this game so better start learning it, too. Adidas Power Plant, P295.

Level Up!
Ragnarok
ONLINE RPG

Boxers may seem a generic gift for guys, but your guy will surely be able to use them. They now have really cute designs. Make sure you know your boyfriend's correct waistline. All Boxed Up, around P300.

If your boyfriend is a "Ragnarok" addict, get him a P350 prepaid game card that gives him unlimited access to Level Up Games—Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game (MMORPG) for an entire month. If you don't quite understand what "Ragnarok" is, visit level-up-games.com for more info. Also available are prepaid game cards at P50 (8 hours) and P100 (unlimited access for 1 week). Available at selected Internet cafes and dealers.

Limpbizkit's latest album, "Results May Vary," is out. The 16-track album features great music such as "Build a Bridge," "Drown" and "Eat You Alive". Get him this album to prepare him for when Limpbizkit's visit to Manila. P450, Tower Records.

P500 and above

Is he a "Lord of the Rings" fan? Even if he's not, he's going to have a laugh trip with "Bored of the Rings" by Douglas C. Kenney and Henry N. Beard. Although the book was written a long time ago (late '60s), it still is a funny read, especially if he enjoys parodies. P495 at Fully Booked.

If you want to go on an Italian date with your boyfriend, give him a gift certificate at Italianni's, P500.

Simple yet funny comic books like "Calvin and Hobbes" will remind him of his childhood. "Scientific Progress Goes Boink" by Bill Watterson, P575 at Powerbooks.

Everybody should own a Swiss army knife. But your guy might find it a hassle to have one of those traditional designs. Thank goodness there is now a slim Victorinox Swiss Card, which fits in the wallet or pocket. The card has a letter opener, ballpoint pen, straight pin, toothpick, tweezers, nail file with screwdriver, scissors and ruler. It's available in different colors. P903 at Zwilling J.A. Henckels.

THE ULTIMATE, BEST-SELLING PARODY OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS!
Bored of the Rings
BY THE HARVARD LAMPOON
NOT the inspiration for ANY epic motion picture!

Let your boyfriend have some quality time with his buds. Give him two cases of beer this Christmas season so he can throw an instant party. Your guy will thank you for being ingenious and sympathetic to his need to hang out with his friends every now and then. You may want to keep half a case so you can have your own party with your girl friends. San Mig Light and San Mig Pale Pilsen in cans, P960, two cases. Red Horse Beer in cans, P912, two cases.

TERMINATOR 3
RISE OF THE MACHINES

P1000 and above

If you have P1,000 to spare, get him the "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines" DVD. Don't forget the popcorn. "Terminator 3" is around P1,200 in leading video stores.

If you give your guy a shirt, he'll probably wear it even if it doesn't do much for him. But with Puma BB Better Tees, he will definitely look and feel good. The shirts are made of 55 percent cotton and 45 percent jersey polyester so he'll be comfortable. Available in two colors: Seedpearl White-Catsup Rust and Insignia-Blue Seedpearl White. P1,250, Planet Sports.

Caps always have a place in a guy's wardrobe. And white is in again. Make his attire casual cool with old school Adidas caps, around P1,300.

E-mail the author at trina_yap@edsamail.com.ph

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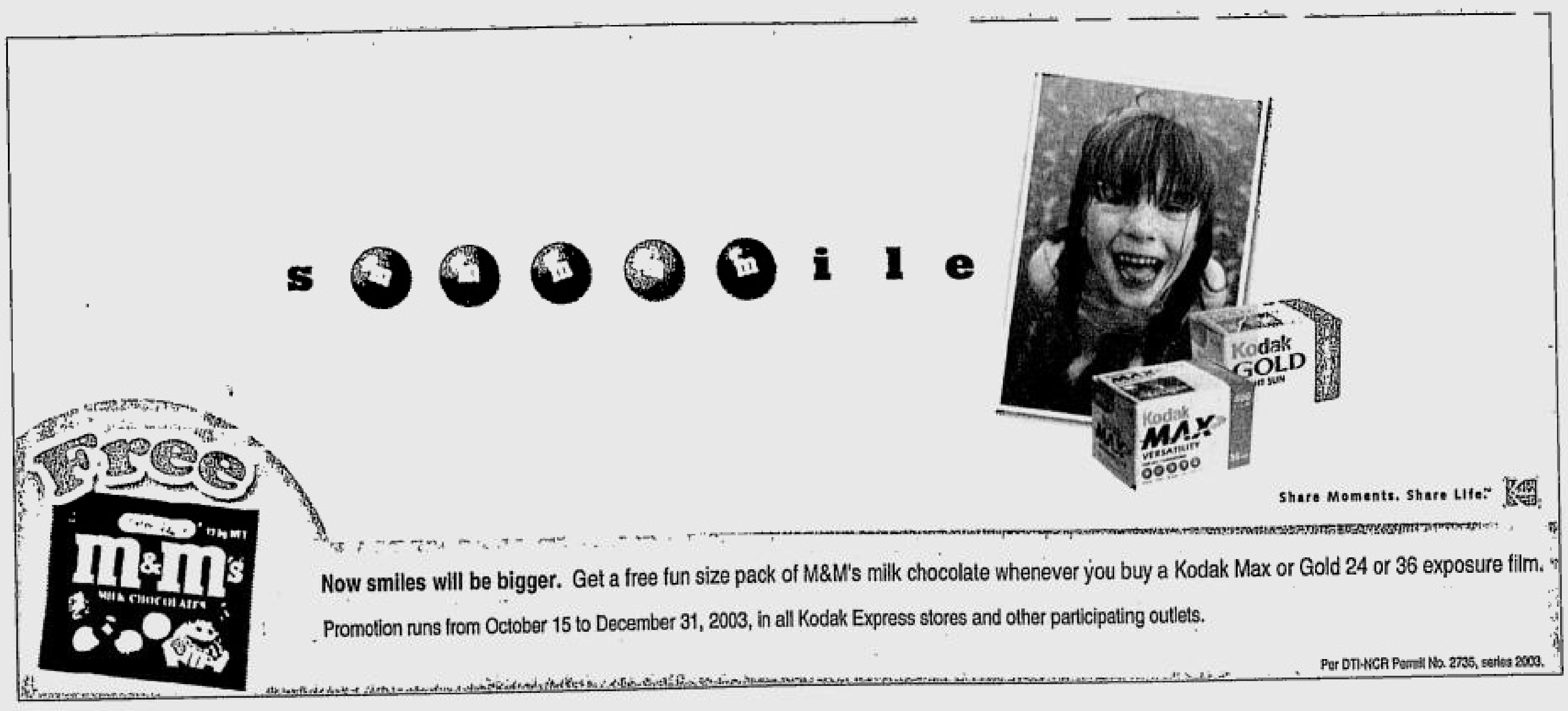
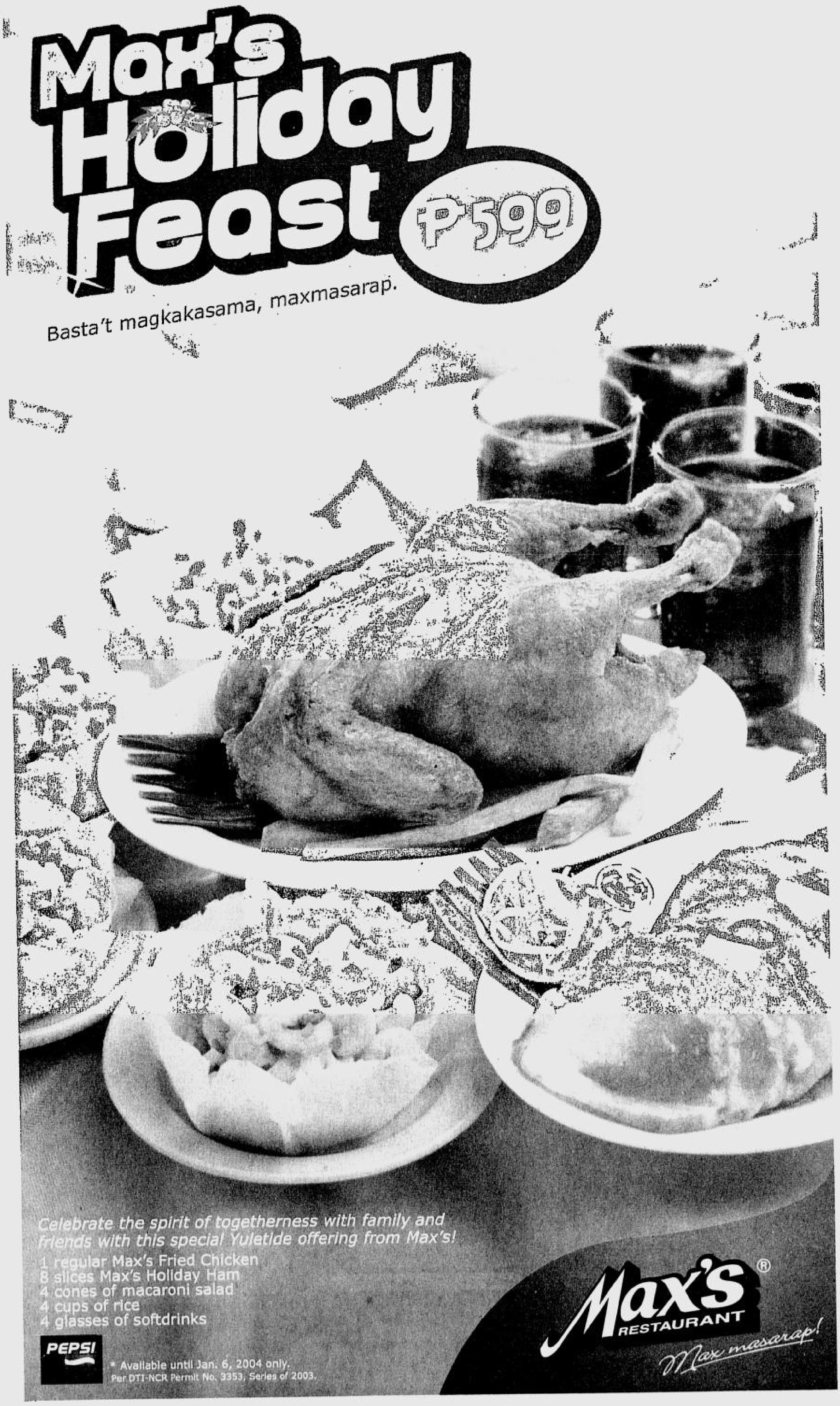


Now smiles will be bigger. Get a free fun size pack of M&M's milk chocolate whenever you buy a Kodak Max or Gold 24 or 36 exposure film.

Promotion runs from October 15 to December 31, 2003, in all Kodak Express stores and other participating outlets.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2735, series 2003.



Celebrate the spirit of togetherness with family and friends with this special Yuletide offering from Max's!

1 regular Max's Fried Chicken
8 slices Max's Holiday Ham
4 cones of macaroni salad
4 cups of rice
4 glasses of softdrinks

* Available until Jan. 6, 2004 only.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3353, Series of 2003.

THE 2BU! YEARENDER SURVEY

Vote for the best and worst of 2003

AMONG last year's big winners were Mandy Moore, Harry Potter, Incubus, Chicosci, Norah Jones, John Mayer, Magic 89.9, Greenbelt 3 Cinemas, Jon Hall, Sarah Meier, Bench Fix, McDonald's, KFC Hotshots, BJ Manalo, Amazing Race and CSI.

Who will be the big winners of 2003?

We want you to be the judge again. Tell us who you think deserve to be hailed the Best and Worst of 2002 under the following categories:

Music: band, song, singer, radio station, radio dj, music video, album packaging, concert

Film: movie, movie theater, actor, actress

Fashion: male model, female model, fashion designer, brand, shop, trend, accessory, fashion icon

Health and beauty: beauty product, spa, salon, hairstyle, fitness regimen

Literature: book, writer, magazine

Food: restaurant, dish, fast food

Sports: athlete, UAAP team, NCAA team

Television: commercial, TV show, TV actress, TV actor, VJ, music channel

Technology: website, gadget, game

Send your answers to 2bU! Best and Worst of 2003 Poll, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague St., Makati; or e-mail contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph. Have your answers in by 12 nn on Dec. 27.

DOT opens first national rodeo competition

RAMPAGING rodeo action unfolded in Manila yesterday when the Department of Tourism-organized first National Rodeo Competition, one of the special events in the Visit Philippines 2003 campaign, kicked off at the Quirino Grandstand.

Tourism Secretary Richard J. Gordon said that the three-day competition will enhance DOT's efforts to promote sports tourism and rodeo itself through the participation of teams from eight regions, led by teams from Bukidnon and Masbate, considered the country's rodeo capitals.

"This exciting and fun-filled competition is one way to draw interest from tourists, especially in destinations where the sport is flourishing, and at the same time hone the rodeo skills of Filipinos," said Gordon.

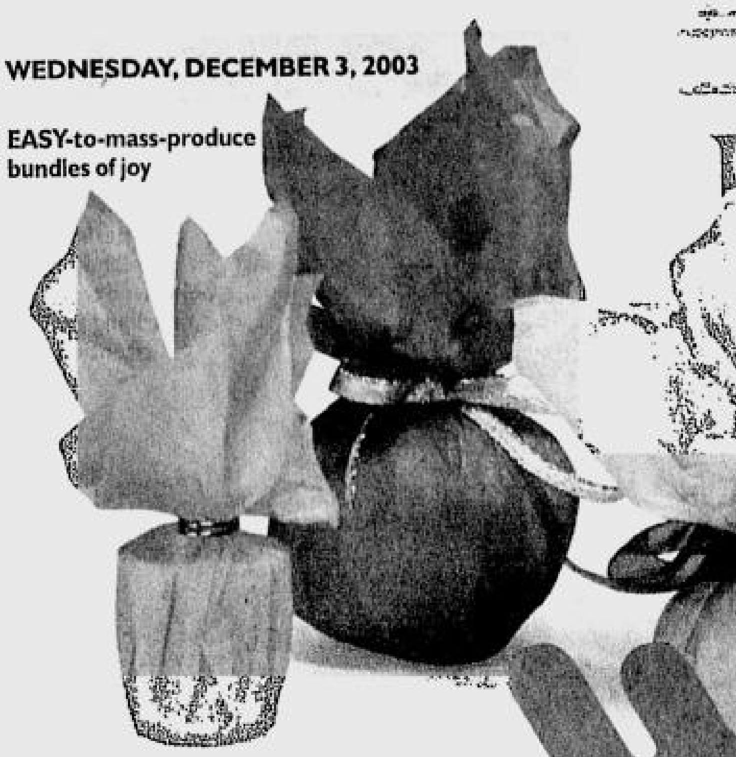
There are different categories and events in the competition. In the individual category, the events include lassoing on horseback and on foot, load carrying (each contestant will be given five sacks of sand weighing 50 kilograms per sack to be carried back and forth over a distance of 20 meters), cattle wrestling and, considered the most exciting event, cattle-bareback riding.

For group category, there's the Casting down event and *carambola*, which both require four members in each competing teams, plus the tug-of-war, which will show the collective strength of participating six-member teams.

A grand parade of participants was held at 3 p.m. yesterday, followed by the opening ceremony and rodeo exhibitions featuring lady participants doing the *carambola*. Competition proper ensues in the next two days beginning 8 a.m. at the Quirino Grandstand. The contest closes Dec. 4.

Individual champions per event will be awarded P140,000, second placers P105,000 and third placers P70,000. The overall team champion will receive P100,000, first runner-up P75,000 and second runner-up P50,000.

2bU! to be you • to be you • To be you!



EASY-to-mass-produce bundles of joy

BOX and gift in one

GIFT WRAPPING 101

It's a wrap!

By Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

LET'S admit it. We all love receiving gifts. The joy and excitement is all part of the Christmas season. What's more exciting is to receive beautiful Christmas packages that are almost too nice to unwrap.

If you have money to spare after your holiday shopping, bookstores, malls and specialty shops have counters to wrap gifts for you. But if you think that it's better to spend your money on the gifts, then try to spare a whole afternoon and release your creativity for some serious wrapping.

Gift-wrapping isn't a daunting task. All you need are a couple of materials, ribbons and even scraps saved from previous holidays.

There are materials other than Christmas-themed paper for wrapping your presents. Visit a bookstore and you will marvel at the different kinds of paper they have in stock.

Gift wrapping also need not be expensive. Think of ways to jazz up the reliable cellophane. You can also try wrapping gifts in bubble wrap and craft paper, and use adhesive tapes with wacky prints.

Even gifts need accessorizing. You can use ribbons, natural-fiber cords, twisted paper and even a string of beads. Use papers of different colors, textures and shapes to liven up a package. Ready-to-use bows and ribbons can be bought. I recommend Bow Orchid from National Bookstore. It's only P7 and, with one pull, you've got a perfect bow.

Packaging from grocery

Check out the grocery aisles for things you can use for your gift-wrapping—aluminum foil, some party favors and even tissue paper. If you want to stick to the Christmas theme, look for printed table napkins. They may be a bit expensive, though.

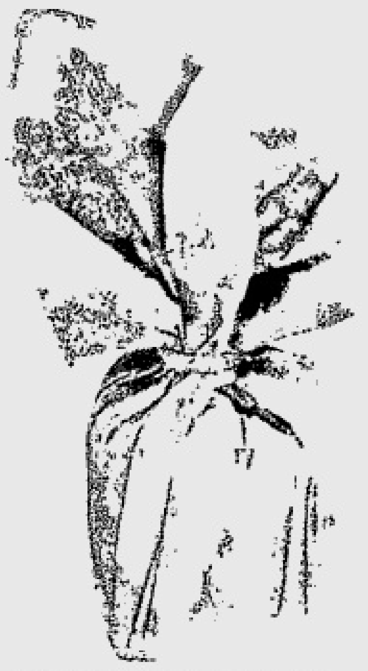
You can use nice boxes that are already fancy packages on their own. Just add a nice ribbon to keep the lid in place. Try stores like Papemelroti and the *tiangge* for the pretty boxes. If you've got time on your hands, make a decoupage box. You can put your friend's name or pictures of her fave actor.

Instead of the typical green and red, try other festive colors like classic silver, bright orange and even shocking fuchsia. Or better yet color-code your gifts: blue for your college *barkada*, orange for your cousins, gold for your family.

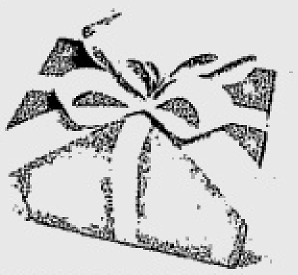
Bring out your Martha Stewart skills and turn a drab paper bag into something fab. Use ribbons, *sinamay* cloth and even stickers to jazz up a plain brown paper bag. For the kids, it's best to wrap their gifts in easy-to-undo material since they'll be ripping them off the second you hand it to them.

All you need is *papel de hapon* and ribbons, string or twisted rope for tying. This technique is absolutely foolproof. Just make sure that you use paper twice the height of the gift.

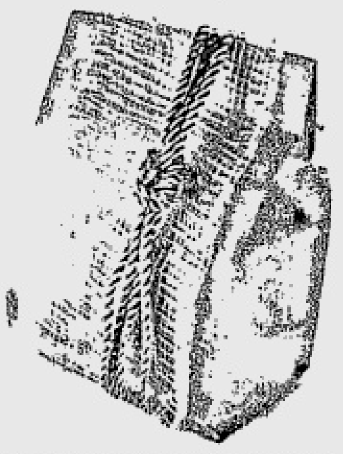
Gift wrapping need not be perfect. What's important is that you'll make your loved ones feel extra special because of the time and effort you poured into wrapping their Christmas presents. Happy holidays!



CHRISTMAS-THEMED table napkin used as gift-wrapping paper

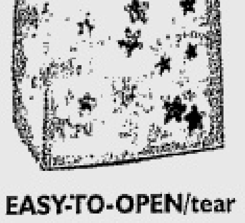


HIGHLY recommended! This orchid bow is only P7!



FROM DRAB to fab paper bag

BOX and bows



EASY-TO-OPEN/tear bag for the kiddies

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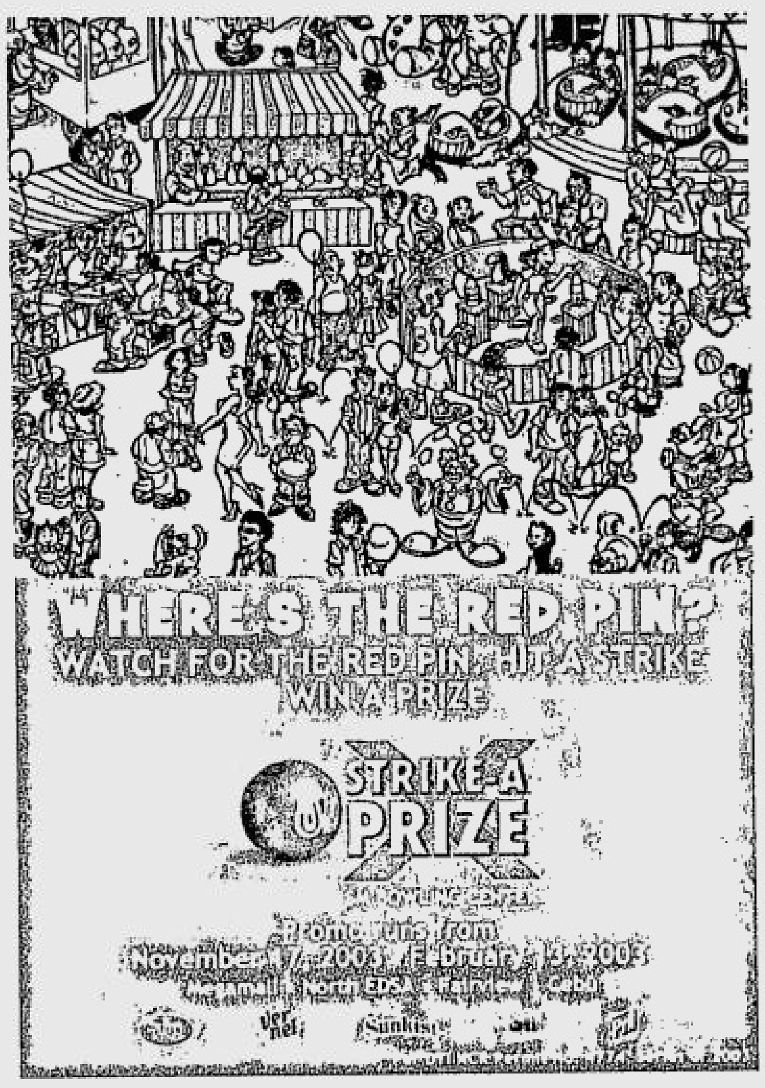

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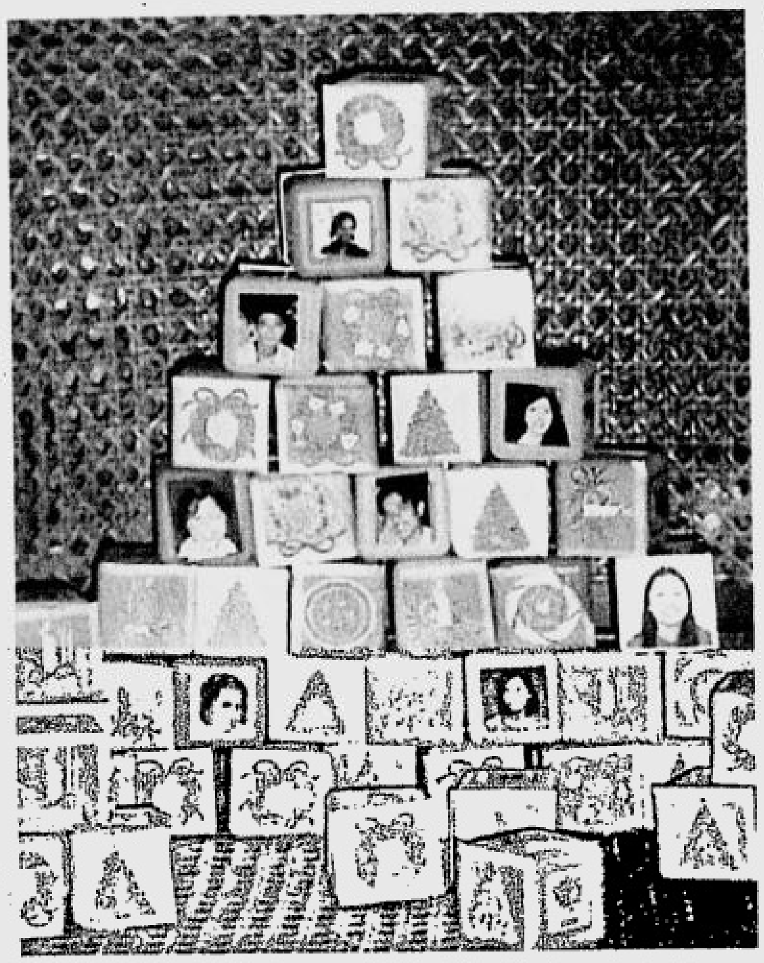
Extra-special trees for an extra-special Christmas

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent



IT'S A BLOCK THING. A pyramid of building blocks posted with Christmas pictures

A SURE presence in Filipino homes as early as November, the Christmas tree is often considered the most important Christmas decor. Visitors instantly look for it. Mothers lavishly and expensively embellish the trees, and then invite their friends to come over and have *merienda*.

But with every December that comes, some Christmas ball gets broken and other decor fade in quality and style. Christmas trees of yesteryears get boring with the same ornaments, so some people end up buying new tree trimmings or even new trees.

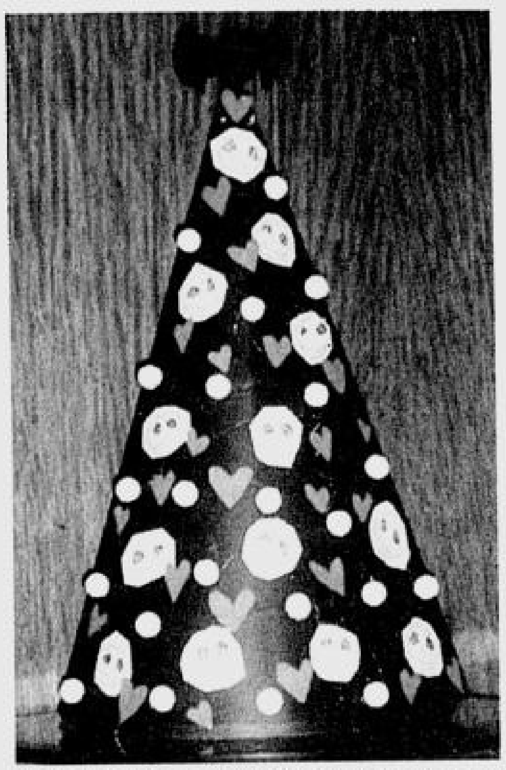
Here is a serving of fresh ideas on how to have a truly unique tree this year.

'Punung pamasko'

Get a huge clay pot or vase. Using poster paint, acrylic or fabric paint in tubes, create Christmas designs or write holiday greetings.

Put some clean branches of various lengths and looks inside. You might want to wrap them in a ribbon, paint and cover them with glitter or just leave them as they are.

Since Pinoys love the "belen," use its characters in embellishing the tree. Go look for a camel and the Magi. Remember to keep Joseph and Mary very close. And don't forget the star.

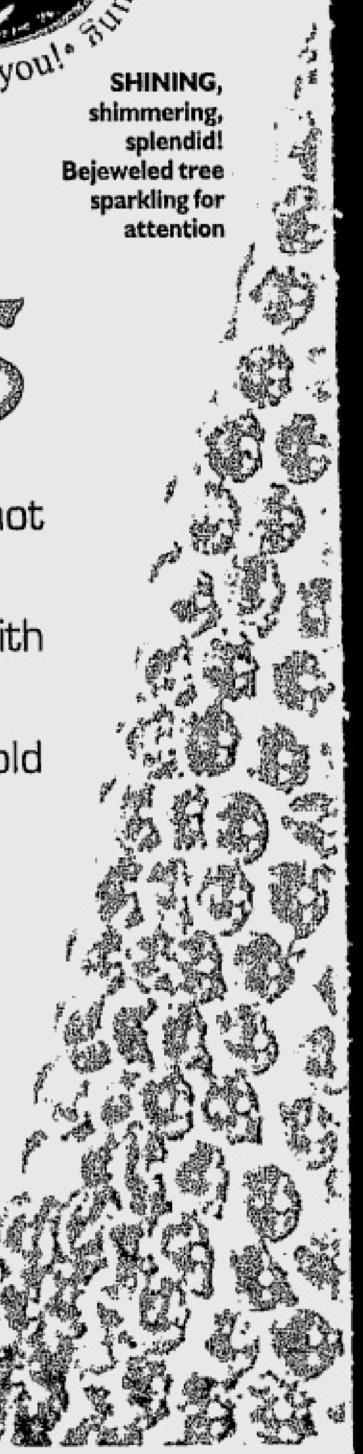


CHRISTMAS comeback. Who says Halloween can't return this season?

Gallery of gifts tree

The first step is to produce ID-sized pictures of the special people in your life—mom, dad, *lolo*, *lola*, Jude Law, etc.—and paste

You need not be stuck with the same old tree year after year



SHINING, shimmering, splendid! Bejeweled tree sparkling for attention

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Fun fêtes for the holidays

Try a couple of these party suggestions that will have you glowing in no time at all

By Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

IT'S beginning to look a lot like Christmas, but it certainly hasn't been feeling anything like Christmas for the past few weeks, no thanks to the endless political issues and peace-and-order problems we're having.

These days, many people look forward to parties as a way to imbibe the Yuletide gaiety.

But then again, some parties do quite the opposite. Remember those grade school or high-school Christmas parties where all the planning seemed to boil down to "potluck or delivery" and "bring exchange gift?"

Or what about those family parties where you were forced to stand by the tree and sing to a teasing crowd of relatives you had never met until that day?

If the memories of Christmas parties past make you cringe, try a couple of these party suggestions that will have you glowing in no time at all.

Charity party for oldies. Nothing against the kids, but it's time we gave the old folks some attention this Yuletide season. They don't have Aga Muhlach gathering toys for them on TV, so it's up to you to spread some nostalgic holiday cheer among some forgotten *lolos* and *lolas*.

Drop by Golden Acres, Home for the Aged, and Lualhati ng Maynila to give these folks the thing they need most in their advanced age—love and compassion. Bring traditional food and music to recreate the Christmas parties they had enjoyed—or weren't able to—in their youth.

Community banquet. A couple of years back, my high school decided to eschew the usual classroom Christmas party and instead held it outdoors, in the open field, at night.

Yes, there were still song-and-dance numbers by the teachers, but grilling barbecue and *isaw* with the whole high school body, with stars and glowing lanterns lighting up the chilly night, changed the boring pre-vacation Christmas affair into a magical affair.

The sparty. When you've got tinsel on your hair and visions of demented sugarplums dancing in your head, then it's definitely time to take a break from your frenzied holiday shopping.

And what better way to unwind than to spend a day at the spa? Of course, taking your friends with you is always fun, but it might be a better idea to have this party to yourself; that way, you'll leave the spa relaxed, refreshed and ready to face other activities without acting like a tense fire-breathing dragon.

Christmas trick or treat. Take a cue from Halloween and visit the people in your neighborhood, demanding candy. Dress up as Santa, an elf, the Sugar Plum fairy, or a Christmas ornament.

If you want, combine both holidays by dressing as a character from "A Nightmare Before Christmas." Threaten to sing carols if they don't give out the goods.

Christmas movie marathon. Break out all the feel-good holiday movies and spend the day watching them with your friends or family. Snack on candy canes, caramel popcorn, *puto bumbong*, *castañas* and *bibingka*. Suggested films: "A Christmas Carol," "Home Alone," "Babes in Toyland," "Miracle on 34th Street" and vintage Disney Christmas cartoons.

Goodie basket-making. Prepare your Christmas gifts with a select group of friends. Pop out your Christmas CDs, fill the house with the smell of cinnamon-loaded pastries and wrap them up in decorative boxes, eating tidbits along the way. See who can make the least edible fruitcake, and reserve it as a discus for the sportsfest.

Sportsfest. While sportsfests are usually associated with summer and sun, a game of basketball or badminton shouldn't be out of place during the holiday season. Think of how refreshing the cool December air would be after a hot and sweaty game. Besides, it's a nice way to burn the calories after gorging on rum cake, ham and *queso de bola*.

For added fun (or *kabaduyan*), have the teams wear red and green, and the referee dress as Santa.

There are a million other ways to party this holiday season, and they can bring out either the Santa or the Scrooge in you. Experiment with various themes and ideas. But more importantly, don't forget the reason why you're partying in the first place: to enjoy the holidays!

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10 dreaded gifts for Christmas

By JR Victorio
2bU! Correspondent

CHRISTMAS is the season of gift giving—and for some people, it seems, any kind of gift will do.

So year in and year out, the same unimaginative stuff find their way into your gift bag—to your eternal but helpless irritation, as it is considered bad manners to refuse, recycle or, much worse, dis a gift you received.

Here are 10 items you should think twice about wrapping up and sending to your family and friends. Mind you, this isn't a baseless list; we asked around for people's ideas about dreaded Christmas gifts, and these are what we got. Now, survey says...

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Pens

Pens are cute gifts... for corporate giveaways, that is. Unless there's something extraordinary about your pen, chances are the recipient would find it a predictable type of gift.

Candles

Lilac, lavender, mint, rose, citrus... hello, haven't we had enough of these scented horde? Like any other *gasgas* trend, inveterate candle-giving has to end. Let's leave it to the serious collectors, to Halloween and to another candle lighting rally in Edsa.

Mugs

Yes, three out of five Filipinos drink coffee and use mugs, but no one ever uses two mugs in one coffee-sipping session. So if your intended recipient has one already, think of something else to give him or her.

Christmas decor

They're handy, all right, ready for use during the holidays, but for how long? Supposing you open your gift on Dec. 24th, that leaves you only two weeks to flaunt the decor, and wait for a whole year to pass before you can take it out again.

Picture frames or photo albums

Very much a classic gift in kris-kringle activities. They do keep our pictures organized and well preserved, but for sheer top-of-mind, they are better given to hardcore photo addicts and card collectors.

Figurines

Enough of ceramic ornaments, please! This is not a wedding, and you are not giving away souvenirs. You don't want to make the impression that you're just recycling a cute but useless gift given to you two Christmases ago, do you?

Deodorants

Deodorants and soaps may be hygienically significant, but giving these is definitely rude. It's not good to remind someone that he or she stinks right on Christmas day.

Organizer

This is probably a hint that your life is a total wreck and you need some order. Or, the giver was just being lazy and bought the first thing he saw upon entering National Bookstore. In any case, if you hate receiving cheap leather-cased organizers, don't give one as well.

Key chains

Key chains are way too impersonal and ordinary, unless they're gold-plated or encrusted with jewels. Then again, do you think your loved one would stick his or her grubby keys in a key chain that could invite a street mugging? Surely he'd keep it under lock and key, which means your gift won't serve its purpose.

Yes, when it comes to gift-giving, it's the thought that really counts. So do put a bit of thought into your presents.

Candles, mugs, pens, organizers—spare your loved ones any more of these and other predictable presents

SMART zed
100%COOL
LOGO COOLS
LOGO LUVBIRDS
LOGO ANGELBR
LOGO YINYANG2
LOGO AGILA1
LOGO AFRIEND
YOU ME
LOGO ULUVME
ME YOU
LOGO MEYOU
LOGO 4MULA1
LOGO SKULLFIRE
FOR SALE
LOGO HART4SALE
Hello!
LOGO HELLOKID
LOGO BEARDATE
OKiba?
LOGO OKIBA
LOGO BEARPAW
LOGO GIMMES
COOL DOOG
LOGO COOLDOOG
Smile!
LOGO SMILES
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Christmas decor.

your in my
PIC CUPIDO
PIC URINMY
Sabik Saya!
PIC SABIK1
i miss u like CRAZY!
PIC IMYCRAZY
I LOVE YOU BESPREN
PIC BESPREN2
ako si MR. SUAVE!
PIC AKOSUAVE
PIC GULAT
HEY THURR
PIC THURR
PIC RABBITLUV
CUTE AKO
PIC CUTEAKO
PIC DUYAN
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cutie
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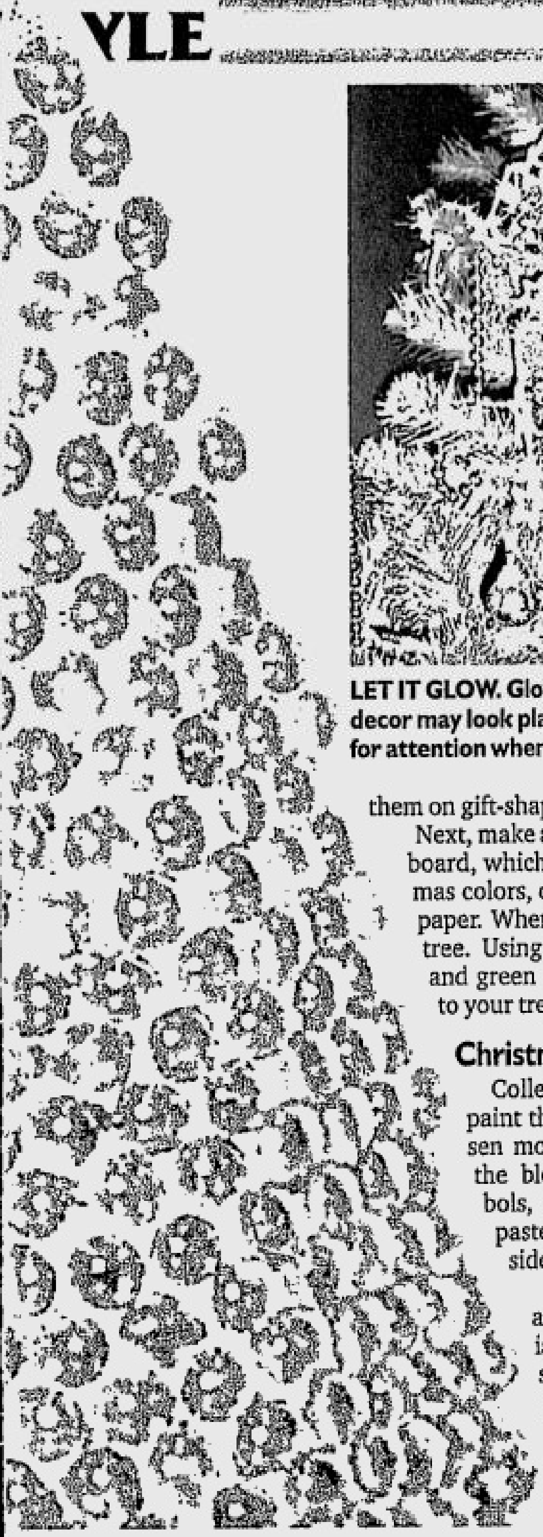
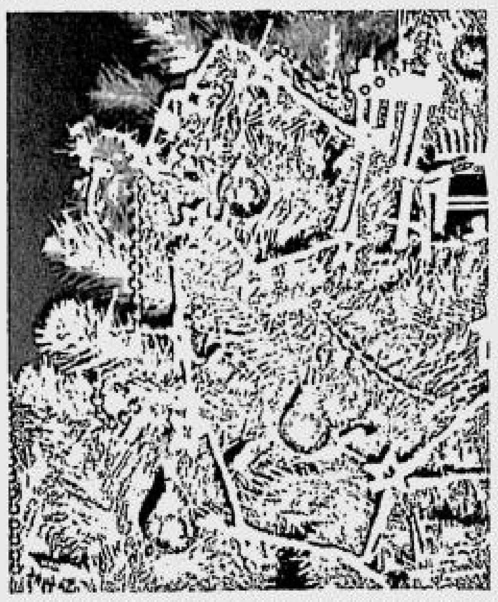
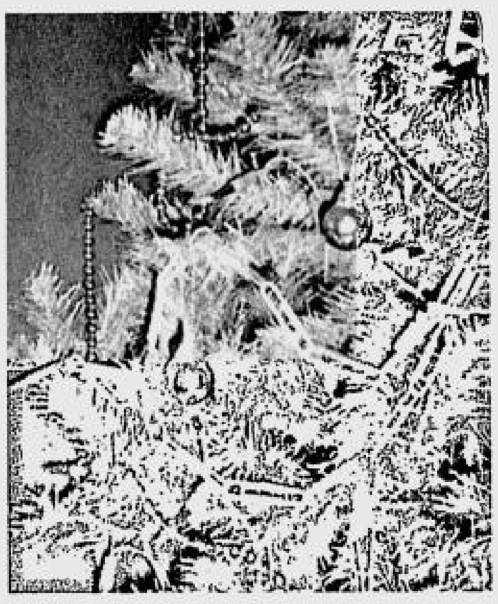




LET IT GLOW. Glow-in-the-dark stars as tree decor may look plain, but they sure will glow for attention when you turn off the lights.



JUST CLIP IT. Paper clips, especially the red, yellow and green ones, can be made into chains to adorn the tree.

them on gift-shaped colored cards.

Next, make a cone using a piece of cardboard, which you can paint with Christmas colors, or cover with gift-wrapping paper. When inverted, it shall be your tree. Using gold tacks or red, yellow and green push pins, add the pictures to your tree.

Christmas pyramid

Collect building blocks and paint them according to your chosen motif. You can then decorate the blocks with Christmas symbols, holiday greetings or even paste pictures on some or all sides.

Once dry, pile them up into a pyramid. The fun bit here is that you can change the shape, height or width of your tree by simply repositioning the blocks, and alter its look by highlighting the cubes' certain sides.

Halloween Christmas tree

Make a cone using a piece of cardboard. Cover it with pieces of cotton or cotton balls. Add silky black ribbons or strips of black lace as decoration. Using black or silver push pins, attach cute little skulls wearing Santa hats or baby bats with candy canes.

Don't forget to put a spider or a moon in place of a star.

Tree of Jewels

As usual, a cardboard cone is needed as the base for this tree. Once colored, painted or covered with wrapper, whip out a glue gun and stick an assortment of beads, rhinestones and other not-so-precious gems to it.

Throwing in everything there may end up as one chaotic masterpiece, but it's also nice to have color motifs and some concentration.

Remember, the options are endless. So don't be afraid to experiment. Enjoy working on that unique tree this year!

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

Unusual ornaments for your traditional tree

Old tree, new ornaments—it's the only way to go out of boredom town

TIRED of those glittery balls and harp-bearing angels festooning your Christmas tree every year? Here's a list of unusual tree decor that just might work for you, your experimental mother or your weird best friend.

Lego people. Since coming up with at least 20 Lego Santas is too much of a feat and challenge, the carpenter and medieval Legos are very welcome to join in the Christmas fun. Imagine how huge a hit your tree would be with the kids!

Face cut-outs. For that really personal touch, photocopies or recopies of the family members' pictures can be used as tree trimmings. Just punch a hole and slip in some Christmas-colored yarn. You can also use Santa, reindeer or elf illustrations and paste pictures on them, and use them as tree ornaments as well.

Koosh Kin balls. Remember those pretty useless toys from decades ago? Well, at least they're pretty enough to be used as tree ornaments.

Various stars. Why not try some uniformity and diversity combined? Cookie stars, serious stars, cartoon stars. And who says stars should be present only at the top of the tree? Impress the guests with a tree full of stars in different designs and sizes.

Since we're talking about stars, glow-in-the-dark stars are a good idea. They will not only save you electricity, they will trigger compliments as well. A dark-green tree studded with light green stars might seem boring to the kids during daytime, but wait till the lights are turned off!

Whip out those **old greeting cards**, especially those that you made yourself decades ago, and put them on the tree.

Why not use **real lollies and candy canes**? They're as decorative as anything else and they're extra attractive to the little kids as well. More than anything else, it's keeping them on the tree that's the challenge.

Flip through the photo albums and make use of those memories. **Snapshots** from Christmases past are a nice idea, but don't limit yourself. You can put out solo shots of the whole family or even kiddie pictures for that sentimental kick.

Paper clips. Clip them everywhere or make a long chain that you can drape over the tree. You can also play with the colors and form the paper clips into various shapes.

Niño Mark M. Sablan

Some secret Christmas recipes

By Marla Cabanban
2bU! Correspondent

I FOUND some of these recipes over the Internet (and I even tried them out just for you, guys), but the pasta recipe is a family favorite (though not original). My only advice is this: It will taste good if you use the exact ingredients; try not to substitute as much as possible (don't compromise quality). You may try Santi's. Follow directions closely. And don't play Darna (or Captain Barbell) and try to do this by yourself. Get help.

Asian-German Potato Salad

1 ½ pounds red potatoes, scrubbed
½ c frozen mixed vegetables
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 large yellow onion, diced
1 tbsp dried minced garlic
salt and pepper to taste
1 c mayonnaise
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce (Lea and Perrins, anyone?)
½ tbsp sesame oil
½ tbsp hot sauce
1 tsp wasabi powder
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 c cooked, cubed ham
¼ c chopped fresh cilantro

Place the potatoes in a large pot of boiling salted water, and cook for about 10 minutes. Stir in the frozen vegetables, and continue cooking for 10-12 minutes until potatoes and vegetables are tender. Transfer to a large bowl. Cut potatoes while still hot, into 1-inch pieces. Set aside to cool.

Heat the olive oil in a skillet. Place the onions in the skillet and season with garlic, salt and pepper. Cook and stir until tender.

In a bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, sesame oil, hot sauce, wasabi powder, ginger and turmeric. Season with salt and pepper.

Toss the cooled potato and vegetable mixture with the onions, mayonnaise mixture, ham and cilantro until evenly coated. Chill until serving.

Makes 6 servings.

Rigatoni with Chorizo and Tomato

1 onion
250 g chorizo sausage
2 tbsp olive oil
425 g canned tomatoes
½ c dry white wine
½-1 tsp chopped chili (optional)
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
375 g rigatoni
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley, for serving
2 tbsp freshly grated parmesan cheese, for serving

Peel onion and slice. Cut chorizo sausage into slices. Heat oil in a frying pan. Add onion and stir over low heat until tender.

Add sausage to pan; cook turning frequently, for 2-3 minutes. Add undrained, crushed tomatoes, wine, chili, salt and pepper. Stir. Bring to boil and reduce heat. Simmer for 15-20 minutes.

While sauce is cooking, add rigatoni to a large pan of rapidly boiling water; cook until just tender. Drain well and return to pan. Add sauce to hot pasta with half of combined parsley and parmesan cheese. Toss to combine well. Serve sprinkled with remaining parsley and parmesan cheese.

Makes 4 servings.

Bananas Foster

¼ c butter
2/3 c brown sugar
3 ½ tbsp rum
1 ½ tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp ground cinnamon
3 bananas, peeled and sliced lengthwise and crosswise
¼ c coarsely chopped walnuts
vanilla ice cream

In a large, deep skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in sugar, rum, vanilla and cinnamon. When the mixture begins to bubble, place bananas and walnuts in pan. Cook until bananas are hot, 1-2 minutes. Serve at once over vanilla ice cream.

Makes 4 servings.

Make your Christmas extra memorable with these delicious recipes

Cappuccino in a Jar

2/3 c instant coffee granules
1 c non-dairy powdered creamer
1 c powdered chocolate drink mix (Hershey's is the best)
½ c white sugar
¾ tsp ground cinnamon
3/8 tsp ground nutmeg

Have ready 2 (12-ounce) canning jars. Put the instant coffee into a food processor, and process to a fine powder. If you don't have a food processor, put it in a plastic bag (Ziploc bags are good) and crush with a rolling pin (or whatever you can use to pound it).

In a large bowl, combine creamer, chocolate mix, instant coffee, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Stir together until well-mixed. Spoon it into the jars.

Attach a note to each jar that reads: Cappuccino: Mix 3 tablespoons of powder with 6 fluid ounces of hot water.

All I don't want for Christmas. . .

What some people want Santa to exclude from his gift bag

By Katrina Anne Yap
2bU! Correspondent

2BU! decided to take a different perspective on the Christmas wish list and asked, "What gift would you not want to receive?" Now pay attention, Santa Claus!

Anything that's recycled, gifts that are obviously not meant for me, and fruitcake!—**Kristine Lising, 20, De La Salle University**

Leather shoes or watches.—**Enrique, 23, DLSU**

Picture frames and photo albums.—**Ralph Calapine, 18, DLSU**

As long as it's real, honest and comes from the heart, I'm not rejecting anything. I'd be overjoyed (just to have) great company and lots of fun.—**Trina, 24, University of the Philippines**

Candles of any kind. I have too many of them already. I actually don't know what to do with the candles I've received as gifts these past years. I don't get to use them anyway, so they just sit on the shelves collecting dust.—**Lianne Bacorro, 21, UP Law**

Not another scented candle, towel or *alkansya*, please. My room is filled with a confusing mixture of scents from the candles I got last year. I prefer to use tissue, and I do keep a bank account now, thank you very much.—**Malou, 21, UP Law**

I wouldn't want to receive any more photo albums or picture frames. Bluntly speaking, I have more albums than photos. Aha! Digital camera *na lang*, please.—**Nico Dimaculangan, 22, UP Law**

Something I wont be able to use like key chains, mugs, figurines. I'll just end up setting them aside to gather dust!—**Denise de los Santos, 19, DLSU**

I don't want to receive an obviously hand-me-down gift, a.k.a. a recycled gift. I don't want anyone to give me a gift they received because they didn't like it or didn't have any idea what to give me.—**Monica, 22, University of Asia and the Pacific**

I don't want to receive figurines anymore.—**Cheng, 22, UA&P**

Books with titles like "Coping with Depression," "Watch Your Weight," "Healing a Broken Heart," and "Are You Beautiful?"—**Dee Castillo, 19, DLSU**

I don't want to receive a one-way ticket to Afghanistan. —**Joan, 25, DLSU**

1. Socks. I have too many already. And by giving socks, what are you implying? My feet stink so I need new socks? 2. Fruitcake. It's a deadly weapon if used properly; 3. Pens. Can you be any cheaper?; 4. Stuffed toys. *Tingnan niyo* birth certificate ko. It says that I'm male; 5. Paulo Coehlo books. Fast food philosophy is not my thing. —**Dep, 22, McCann-Erickson**

No picture frames or scented candles this Christmas, please.—**Kris, 21, McCann-Erickson**

Sana I wouldn't get those figurines my relatives keep giving me, from angels to puppies and Garfield, even fruit baskets! I don't know what to do with them and they end up gathering dust on some shelf at home.—**Uler, 21, ADMU**

I can't think of anything because for me, it's really the thought that counts. It doesn't matter if it's the ugliest or prettiest gift I've ever seen *basta* one person made the effort to give me a gift, happy *na* ako.—**Bel, 22, McCann-Erickson**

No more mugs, please!—**Anj, 20, McCann-Erickson**

I don't want to receive anything edible. First, I feel that food as a gift is not so meaningful or well thought out. Second, there would be tons of parties to attend during the Christmas season, thus, receiving more food as gift would just add to my fat and calorie count. —**Joseph Alcantara, 23, DLSU**

Socks and underwear. I really wouldn't want to show people whether I'm using their gift.—**RJ Alano, 20, Ateneo Law**

I don't want to receive the same gift I gave to that person.—**Nad, 22, Ateneo Law**

Fruitcake!—**Rich Sarinas, 20, DLSU**

Ayoko ng panyo dahil madami na ako non.—**Ryan, 21, DLSU**

I wouldn't want to get fruitcake, or Three Musketeers chocolate bars!—**Stephanie Kahn, 18, DLSU**

I would hate to get skey chains. I don't know why but I always get a few every year, so I have like 30 or 40 of them already.—**Jaime, 21, DLSU-Health Sciences Campus**

Candles, picture frames and fruitcake!—**Cath de los Santos, 21, San Miguel Corporation**

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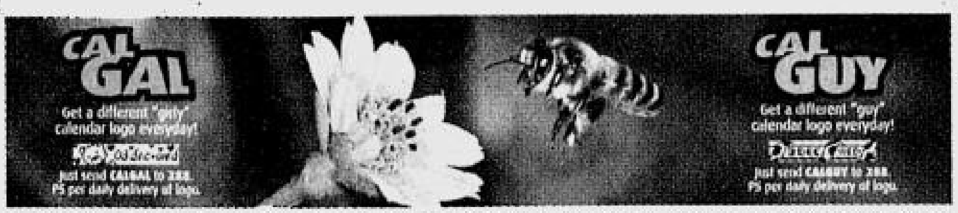
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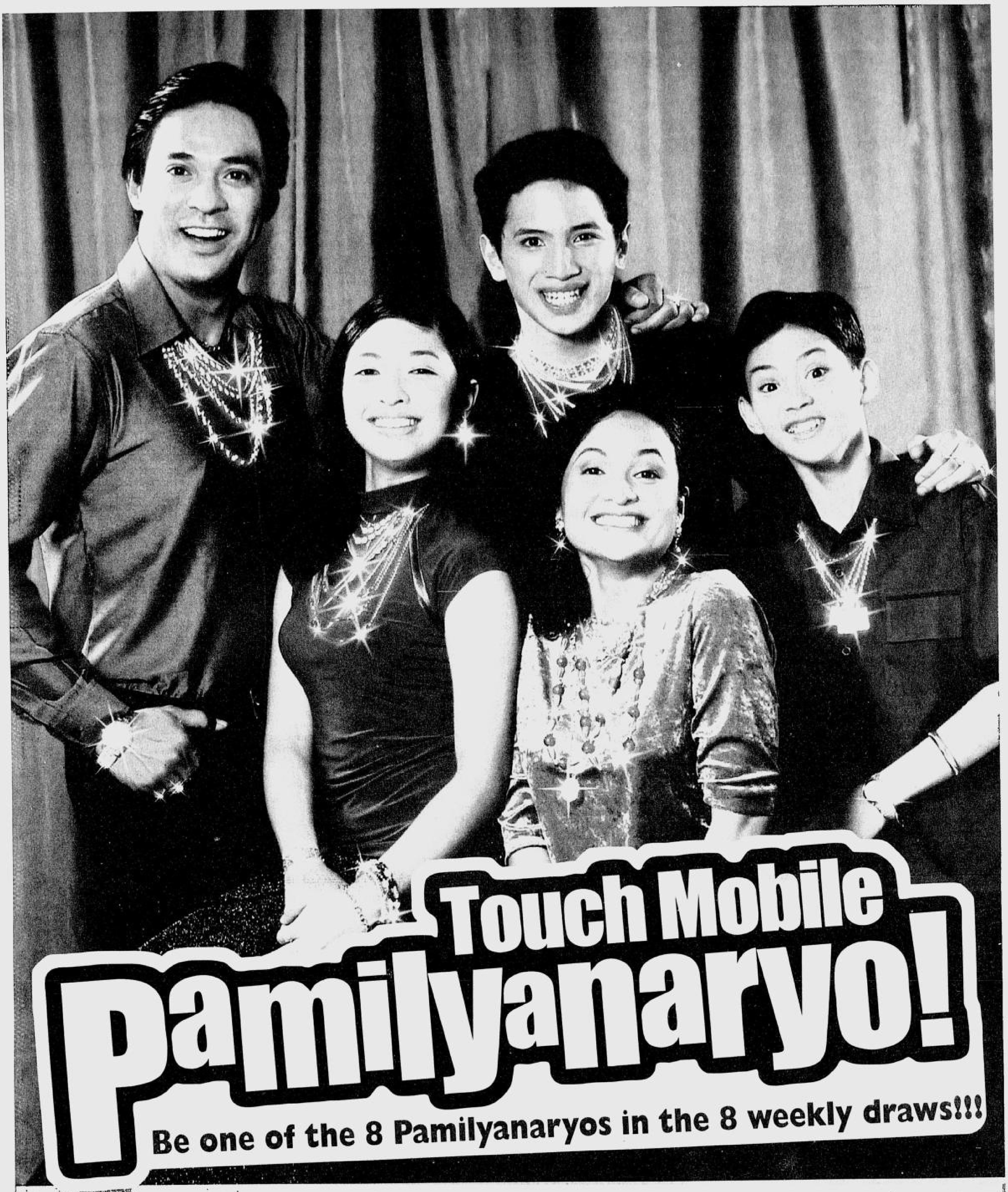
Questions? Comments? Concerns? Call the SMART Hotline at 888-1111, text us at 888 (P1.00 per message sent in excess of the FREE TEXT allocation), e-mail us at customercare@smart.com.ph, or visit the SMART Wireless Center nearest you.
SMART Simply Amazing!



Touch Mobile Pamilyanaryo!

Be one of the 8 Pamilyanaryos in the 8 weekly draws!!!

Mag Touch Mobile na at mag-load nang mag-load para mas malaking chance maging Pamilyanaryo!

1. Only those whose TOUCH MOBILE SIMs are active during the time of joining, winning and claiming of prize are qualified to join and win in this raffle.
2. This promo will run from Dec 1, 2003 till January 31, 2004.
3. There will be one (1) P1,000,000.00 cash tax-free that will be raffled off every week.
4. YOU NEED TO REGISTER TO JOIN THE PROMO. TO REGISTER, Type [reg][space] [your name][space] [your address] and send to 2206. Ex. "reg Juan dela Cruz 123 Mayon St. QC" and send to 2206. Registration is FREE. If you don't register, you won't be qualified to join the promo. You will only be able to earn electronic raffle entries after registration. Your Mobile number will serve as the raffle entry.
5. FOR NEW TOUCH MOBILE SUBS DURING THE PROMO PERIOD – After making your 1st call (or upon activation), and registering for the promo, you will instantly earn 12 raffle entries.
6. FOR EXISTING TOUCH MOBILE SUBS – You will need to register 1st before you can start earning electronic raffle entries with every reload you make.
7. After registration, all your reloads during the promo duration will earn electronic raffle entries. The higher the call card denomination loaded, the more electronic raffle entries earned. All reloads done in any channel will earn electronic raffle entries (plastic call cards, eLoad, BPI Autoload, AutoloadMax, Family Autoload, etc.).
8. The number of entries that can be earned is as follows:
    - Newly activated sub – 12 raffle entries
    - Activated by switching – 12 raffle entries
    - Ps 50 CC – 2 raffle entry
    - Ps 100 CC – 4 raffle entries
    - Ps 200 CC – 8 raffle entries
    - Ps 300 CC – 12 raffle entries
    - Ps 400 CC – 16 raffle entries
    - Ps 500 CC – 20 raffle entries
9. To find out how many entries you have accumulated, text in, "POINTS" and send to 2206. You will be charged P2.50 per inquiry.
10. To find out more about the promo, text in "HELP" and send to 2206 or call 808 using your Touch Mobile phones or 730-1500 using any landline.
11. The more reloads, the more number of electronic entries, the more chances of winning.

Start Date	End Date	Raffle Date
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 10 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 12 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 17 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 19 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 24 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Dec. 26 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Dec. 31 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 05 (Monday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 07 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 09 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 14 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 16 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 21 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Jan. 23 (Friday) 4:00pm
Dec. 1 (Monday) 12:00:00am	Jan. 31 (Wednesday) 11:59:59pm	Feb. 02 (Monday) 4:00pm

12. The weekly draws will be on Dec 12, 19, 26, January 5, 9, 16, 23 and Feb 2, 2004. Deadline of raffle entries and joining of the promo will be on January 31, 2004 at 11:59:59pm.
13. A specific Touch Mobile number can only win once (1x) during the promo period. A subscriber can technically win more than once (1x) given that the drawn Touch Mobile numbers are not identical.
14. All winners will be notified via phone call and registered mail.
15. To validate identity of the winner, he/she will be asked to bring his/her Touch Mobile phone with the winning mobile number and a valid ID. The Cashier or any Globe Telecom Rep releasing the cheque will do a test call to validate the Calling Line Identity (CLI) of the phone. The CLI of the phone should match the winning mobile number. And the registered mail should also be brought when claiming their prize. Any lost SIM's will disqualify him from winning.

*** All notified winners should still have their Touch Mobile SIM active until the time of claiming the prize. Prizes will be forfeited for those who lost their SIMS at the time of claiming their prize

16. Prizes not picked up from within 60 days from receipt of notice will be forfeited with prior DTI approval.
17. Employees of Globe Telecom, Innove, JimenezBasic Advertising, Starcomm and participating Globe Telecom Business Centers including their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
18. Prizes are tax-free.

Per DTI Permit no. 3619 series of 2003.

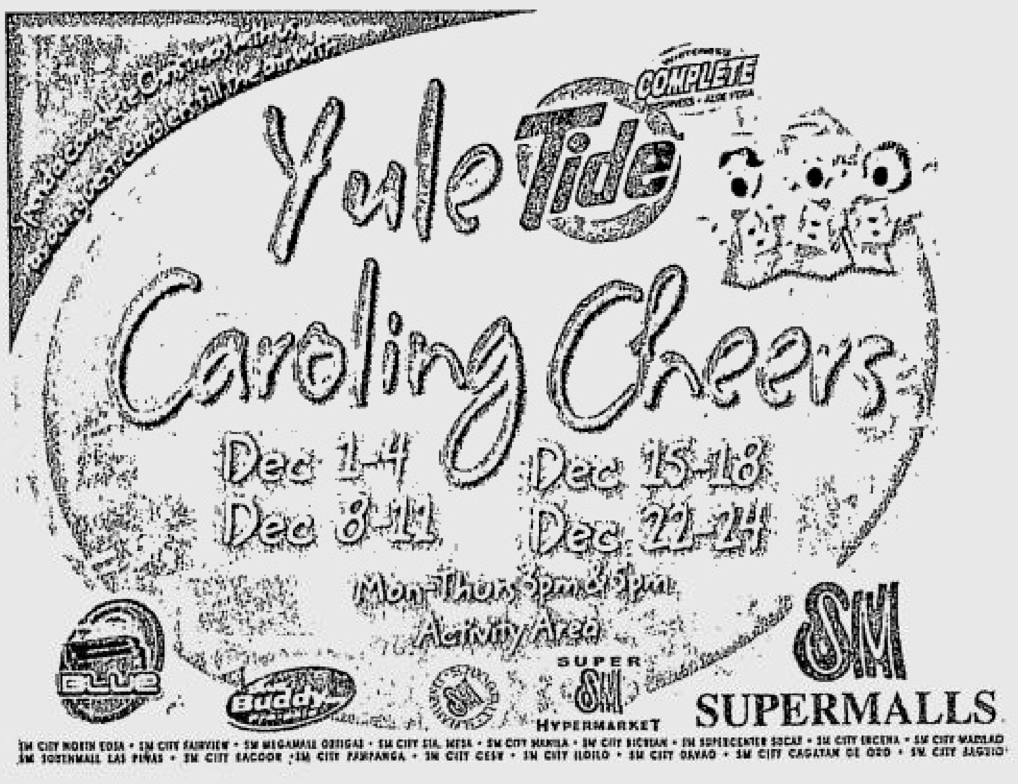
touch
mobile
Because family matters most.

Powered by:
GLOBE TELECOM

2bU!
to be young • to be you • to be young • To be you!

X marks the spot

SUGARFREE'S Jal Taguibao



Yule Tide Caroling Cheers
Dec 1-4 Dec 8-11 Dec 15-18 Dec 22-24
Mon-Thurs 3pm & 5pm
Activity Area
Tide COMPLETE
SUPER SM HYPERMARKET
SM SUPERMALLS
SM CITY NORTH EDSA • SM CITY FAIRVIEW • SM MEGAMALL ORTIGAS • SM CITY STA. MESA • SM CITY MANILA • SM CITY BICUTAN • SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT • SM CITY LUCENA • SM CITY MARILAO
SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS • SM CITY BACOOR • SM CITY PAMPANGA • SM CITY CEBU • SM CITY ILOILO • SM CITY DAVAO • SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO • SM CITY BAGUIO

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

A HUNDRED security guards, a barely-dressed Maui Taylor, and a half-naked Rico Blanco waving the Philippine flag onstage. That's how radio station NU 107 celebrated 10 years of rock n' roll at the World Trade Center last Nov. 26.

It's a year of many firsts at NU. They've got a new station manager, new DJs, new playlists (one DJ swears the old DJs fought to keep Avril Lavigne off the list). Even the production seems to have changed—more strict this time, with bouncers scattered everywhere, and security guards constantly reminding you to put off that cigarette.

They've started to sell Rock Awards tickets (it used to be by invitation only, and listeners could score a few via contests), and the musicians' groupies get to watch the show by the side of the stage on bleachers (while the musicians are left hanging around backstage).

Aside from that? This year's rock awards was just like its past incarnations.

Sure, there was the "kiss" between Michelle Bayle and Andrea del Rosario (no tongue action, though) reminiscent of another glam duo locking lips at another awards show abroad. Maui Taylor made up for her poor attempt at presenting an award by stripping her co-presenter and exposing her underwear to the crowd.

And let's not forget the tribute to Hall of Fame inductees the Eraserheads, with Chicosci and Razorback belting out "Magasin" and "Ang Huling El Bimbo," a performance which some musicians refused to comment on, and Ely being the only one present to receive the award (hosts Tadu and Erning earlier introduced his band, "The Mongols" as "Cynthia Alexander").

And Slapshock was nowhere to be found.

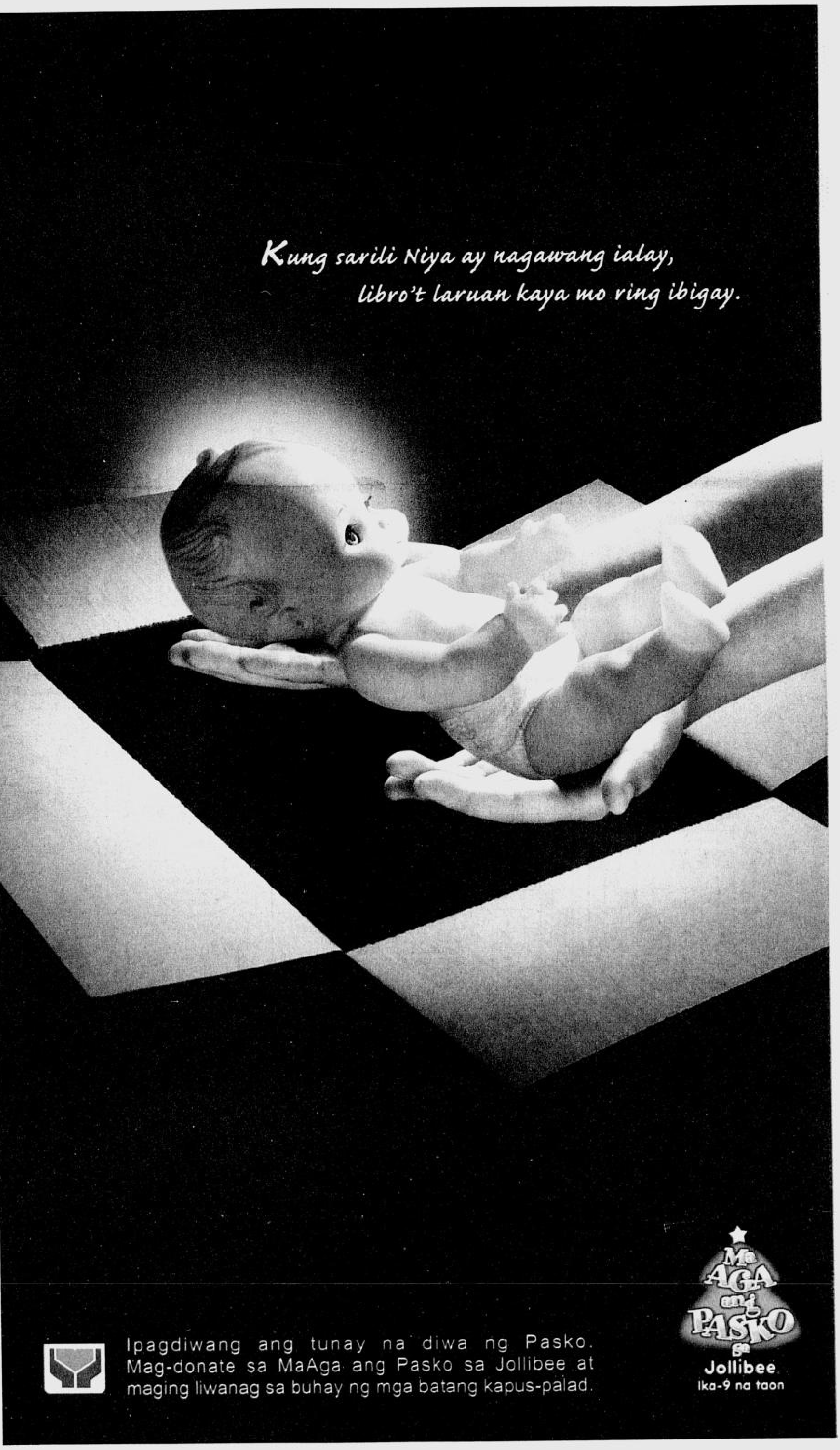
What probably ticked off most people with this year's awards was the security. If last year's show caused people to complain about the lack of it, this year, there was an abuse of it.

Unruly moshers were brought backstage and their heads banged against walls, before being handed over to another bouncer who would do the same. Musicians backstage repeatedly told them to stop hurting the kids, but they still did it anyway.

Mike Elgar of Rivermaya went up to the side of the stage to watch his friends play, and

X MARKS/ F3

MIKE Elgar of Rivermaya in Havoc pants. "But my shirt is from Jag. Honest!"

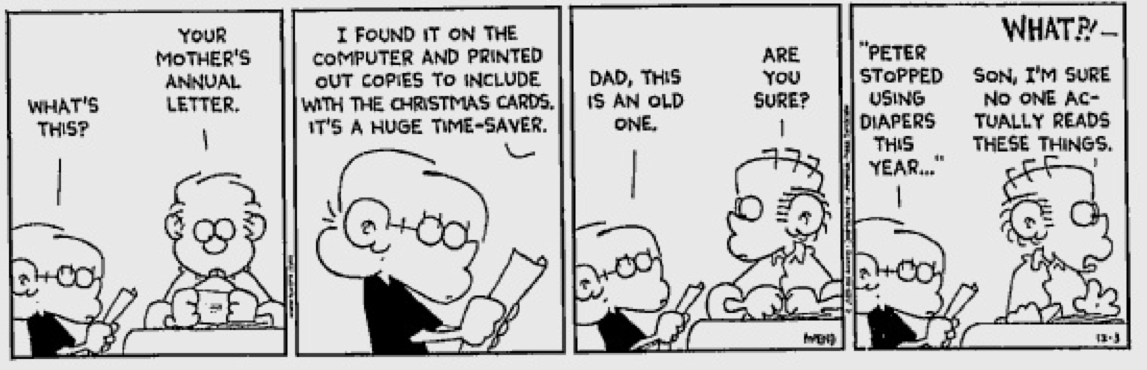


Kung sarili Niya ay nagawang ialay,
libro't laruan kaya mo ring ibigay.

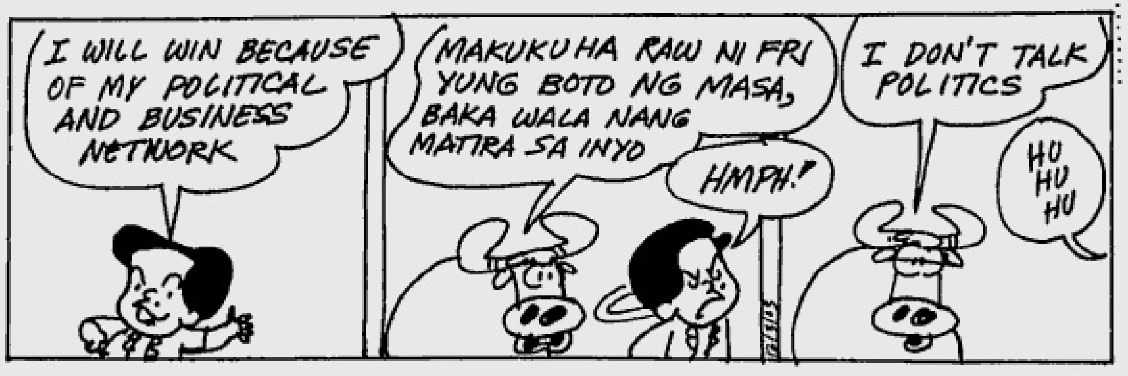
Ipagdiwang ang tunay na diwa ng Pasko.
Mag-donate sa MaAga ang Pasko sa Jollibee at
maging liwanag sa buhay ng mga batang kapus-palad.

MaAGA ang PASKO sa Jollibee
Ika-9 na taon

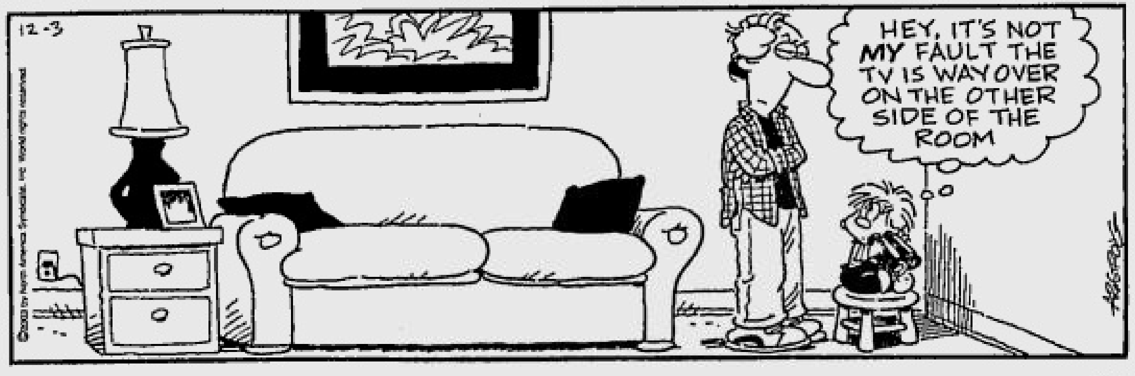
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'S THIS?
YOUR MOTHER'S ANNUAL LETTER.
I FOUND IT ON THE COMPUTER AND PRINTED OUT COPIES TO INCLUDE WITH THE CHRISTMAS CARDS. IT'S A HUGE TIME-SAVER.
DAD, THIS IS AN OLD ONE.
ARE YOU SURE?
"PETER STOPPED USING DIAPERS THIS YEAR..."
WHAT?!—
SON, I'M SURE NO ONE ACTUALLY READS THESE THINGS.
12-3

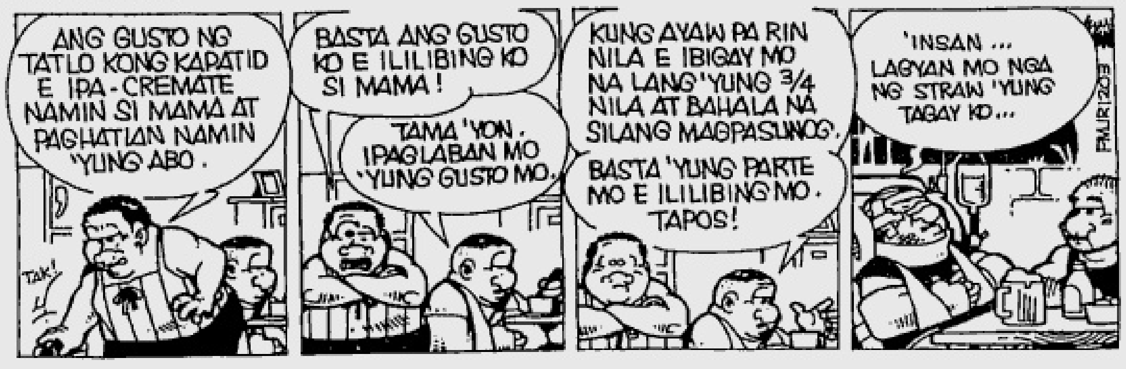
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


I WILL WIN BECAUSE OF MY POLITICAL AND BUSINESS NETWORK
MAKUKUHA RAW NI FPJ YUNG BOTO NG MASA, BAKA WALA NANG MATIRA SA INYO
HMPH!
I DON'T TALK POLITICS
HU HU HU

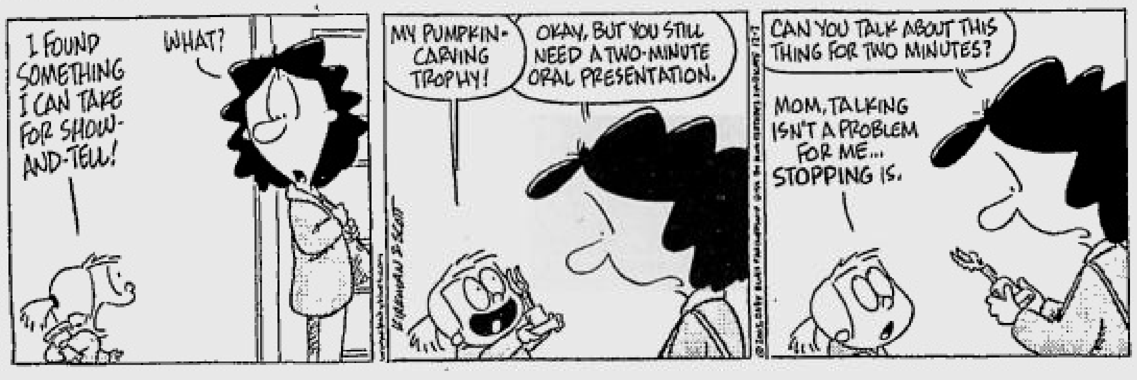
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


12-3
HEY, IT'S NOT MY FAULT THE TV IS WAY OVER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM

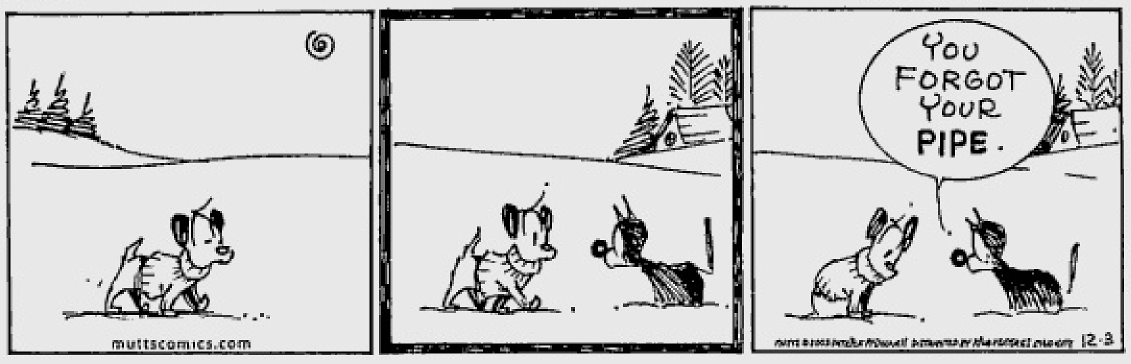
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG GUSTO NG TATLO KONG KAPATID E IPA-CREMATE NAMIN SI MAMA AT PAGHATIAN NAMIN 'YUNG ABO.
TAK!
BASTA ANG GUSTO KO E ILILIBING KO SI MAMA!
TAMA 'YON. IPAGLABAN MO 'YUNG GUSTO MO.
KUNG AYAW PA RIN NILA E IBIGAY MO NA LANG 'YUNG 3/4 NILA AT BAHALA NA SILANG MAGPASUNOG.
BASTA 'YUNG PARTE MO E ILILIBING MO. TAPOS!
'INSAN ... LAGYAN MO NGA NG STRAW 'YUNG TAGAY KO...
PAURI203

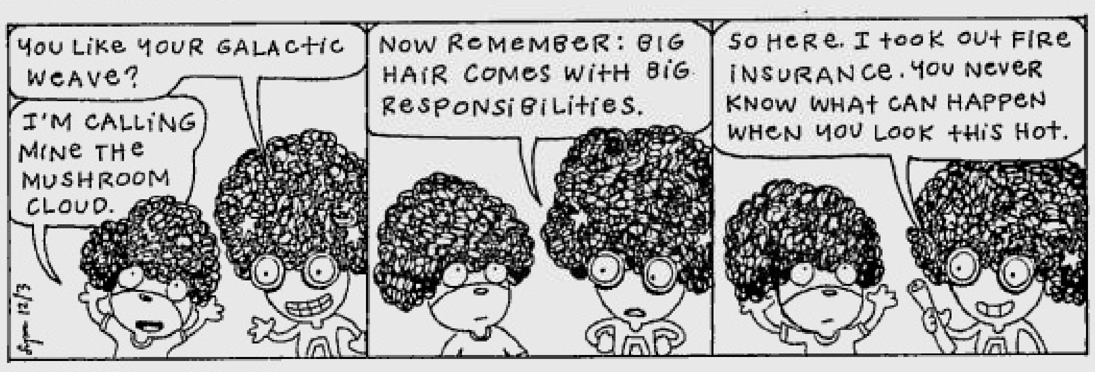
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


I FOUND SOMETHING I CAN TAKE FOR SHOW-AND-TELL!
WHAT?
MY PUMPKIN-CARVING TROPHY!
OKAY, BUT YOU STILL NEED A TWO-MINUTE ORAL PRESENTATION.
CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THIS THING FOR TWO MINUTES?
MOM, TALKING ISN'T A PROBLEM FOR ME... STOPPING IS.

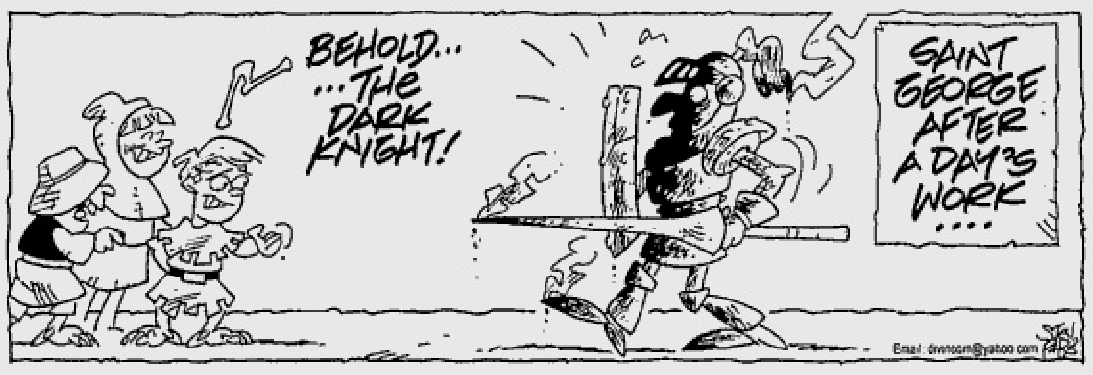
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


muttscomics.com
YOU FORGOT YOUR PIPE.
12-3

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YOU LIKE YOUR GALACTIC WEAVE?
I'M CALLING MINE THE MUSHROOM CLOUD.
NOW REMEMBER: BIG HAIR COMES WITH BIG RESPONSIBILITIES.
SO HERE. I TOOK OUT FIRE INSURANCE. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN YOU LOOK THIS HOT.
12/3

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BEHOLD... ...THE DARK KNIGHT!
SAINT GEORGE AFTER A DAY'S WORK ....
Email: divncom@yahoo.com

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are original and innovative. You see the world through your own perspective. You have creative gifts and talent. Although sometimes extroverted—even outrageously so—you are actually a private person. You can become very caught up in your work. Important choices await you this year. Whichever door you choose leads to a different path.

Birthdate of: Ozzy Osbourne, musician; Joseph Conrad, writer; Julianne Moore, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today you're attracted to mystical subjects. Anything from UFOs to renewed faith to ancient teachings from other cultures will intrigue you now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might become involved in charitable activities today. Your idealism is aroused, and being a practical earth sign, you look for common-sense solutions. Good.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You are interested in the mysteries of life and death today. Secrets of the soul and hidden knowledge appeal to you now. You want to know more about life.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're more than ready to help others. You're prepared to put their needs before your own. Don't worry; you're not being a doormat—you're being compassionate.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The Muse is speaking to you today. Trust your creative instincts. You bring imaginative skills to any output that is artistic or related to design, music and words.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel particularly sympathetic toward a family member today. You want to help. Possibly, somebody feels this way about you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You need quiet time to think today. Your mind wants to drift and just appreciate nature. You need time to daydream. (Never underestimate the importance of dreams.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You want to buy something quite luxurious for your home or a family member. Possibly, it relates to bathrooms or plumbing. You want to be pampered!

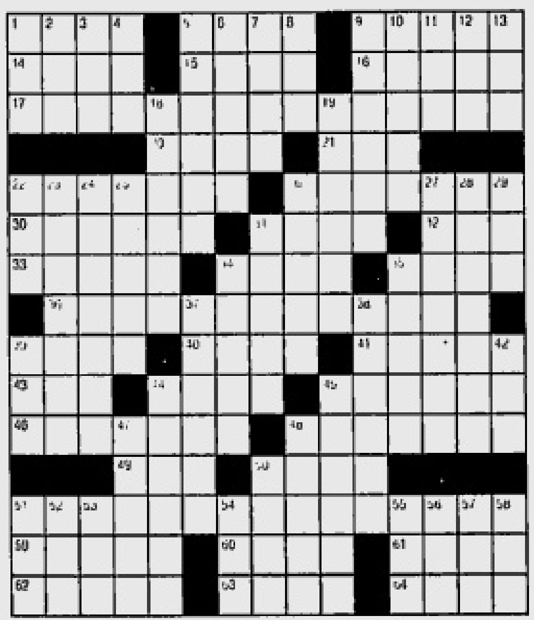
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Confidential conversations take place today between you and siblings, neighbors or relatives. Others are inclined to bare their souls to you. (They might need a sympathetic ear.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today you're able to sense subtle energies in the people and circumstances around you. Because you are more aware of the needs and wants of others, you're more willing to help them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It will please you if you are in a position to help a friend today. One of the best things we can do for our loved ones is to remain healthy and solvent.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're willing to champion the cause of co-workers and neighbors today. You see that what is done to one is really done to all. (That's because we're all in this Big Soup together.)

DAILY CROSSWORD

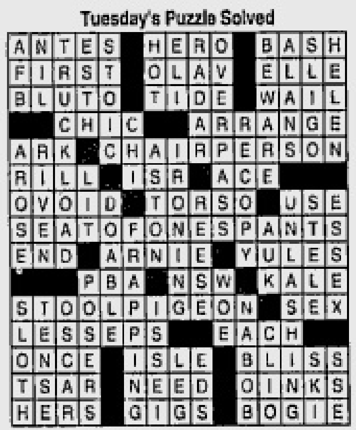


By Janet R. Bender
Somerset, PA
12/3/03

ACROSS
1 Nabisco cracker
5 Info
9 Quips
14 Piece of land
15 Comic Sandler
16 __ nous
17 Author of "The Necklace"
20 Polish companion
21 Can. province
22 Part of an audio system
26 Former Netherlands currency
30 Lincoln's V.P.
31 John Wayne film, "True __"
32 Tin Man's tool
33 "Tuesdays with Morrie" author
34 Kind of contract
35 Pale
36 Tony-winning musical
39 Military post
40 Annexes
41 Author Zola
43 Tie-breaker periods: abbr.
44 Ballet bend
45 Search-party member
46 Eavesdropper's post
48 Nightstand's location
49 Comic Philips
50 Tilden of tennis
51 Non-member sympathizers
59 Citrus fruit
60 Sudan river
61 Diva's number
62 Gossip
63 Santa's sackful
64 Medical shot?

DOWN
1 Worn cloth
2 Hosp. area
3 Attempt
4 Londoner's last letter
5 Moisten
6 Oil-well firefighter Red
7 Like a drumhead
8 Unit of elec.
9 Follower of St. Ignatius of Loyola
10 Photographer Adams
11 Bake-sale holding grp.
12 European eagle
13 Ready to go
18 Inuit
19 Eagle of stars
22 __ Na Na
23 Hand-shaped
24 Ambassador's headquarters
25 Unchallenged
26 Metric units
27 African caftan
28 Breathed out
29 "The Bridge of San Luis __"
31 Test score
34 Classic track
35 Summits
37 Plowed but left unseeded
38 Implement with an eye
39 __ choy
42 Afore
44 L.A. suburb
45 Individuals
47 Spartan serf
48 Onion roll
50 Vivacity
51 Picnic pest
52 Shoe-box letters
53 K-O connection
54 Blasting letters
55 Too tolerant
56 Miss a step
57 Narrow inlet
58 For instance

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



ANTES■HERO■BASH
FIRST■OLAV■ELLE
BLUTO■TIDE■WAIL
■■CHIC■■ARRANGE
ARK■CHAIRPERSON
RILL■ISR■ACE■■■
OVOID■TORSO■USE
SEATOFONESPANTS
END■ARNIE■YULES
■■■PBA■NSW■KALE
STOOLPIGEON■SEX
LESSEPS■■EACH■■
ONCE■ISLE■BLISS
TSAR■NEED■OINKS
HERS■GIGS■BOGIE

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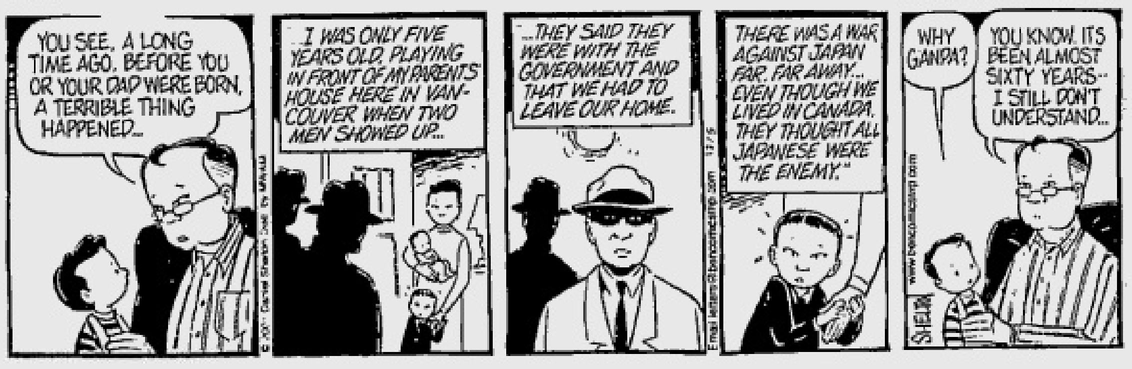
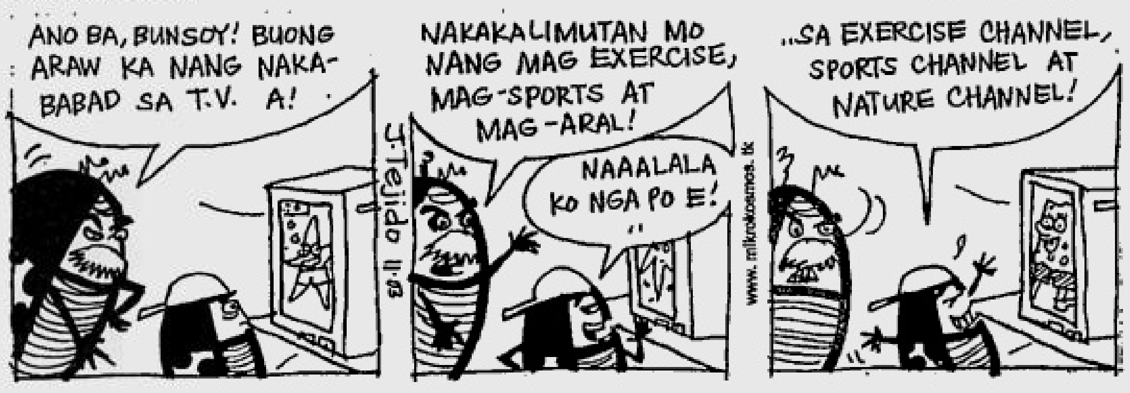
12/2/03

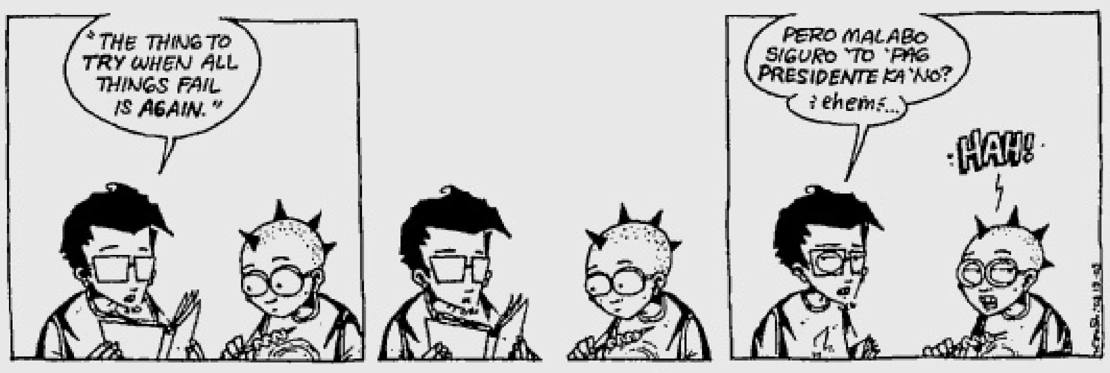
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU SEE, A LONG TIME AGO, BEFORE YOU OR YOUR DAD WERE BORN, A TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED...
...I WAS ONLY FIVE YEARS OLD, PLAYING IN FRONT OF MY PARENTS' HOUSE HERE IN VANCOUVER WHEN TWO MEN SHOWED UP...
...THEY SAID THEY WERE WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND THAT WE HAD TO LEAVE OUR HOME.
THERE WAS A WAR AGAINST JAPAN FAR, FAR AWAY... EVEN THOUGH WE LIVED IN CANADA, THEY THOUGHT ALL JAPANESE WERE THE ENEMY."
WHY GANPA?
YOU KNOW, ITS BEEN ALMOST SIXTY YEARS... I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND...

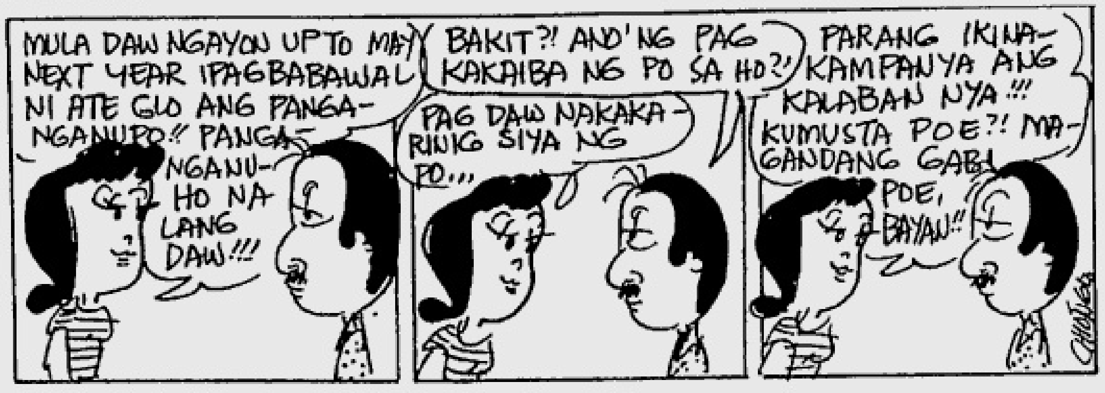
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANO BA, BUNSOY! BUONG ARAW KA NANG NAKABABAD SA T.V. A!
NAKAKALIMUTAN MO NANG MAG EXERCISE, MAG-SPORTS AT MAG-ARAL!
NAAALALA KO NGA PO E!
J. Tejido 11-03
www.mikrokosmos.tk
...SA EXERCISE CHANNEL, SPORTS CHANNEL AT NATURE CHANNEL!

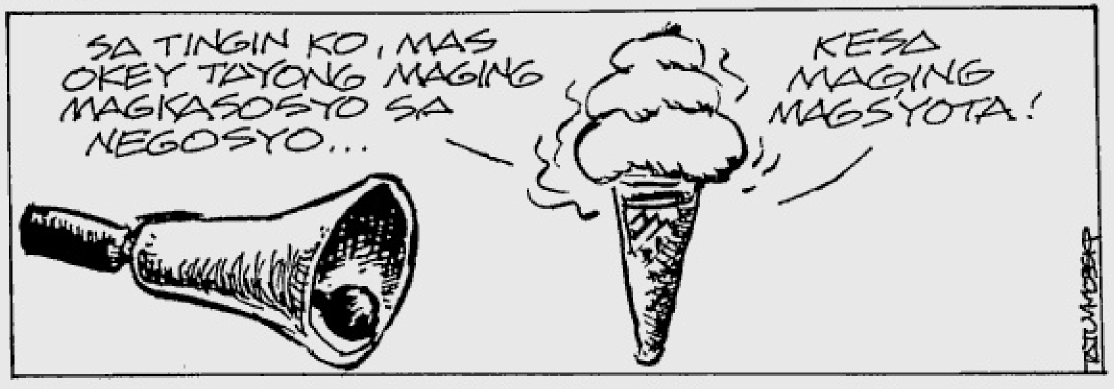
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


"THE THING TO TRY WHEN ALL THINGS FAIL IS AGAIN."
PERO MALABO SIGURO 'TO 'PAG PRESIDENTE KA 'NO? ;ehem;...
HAH!

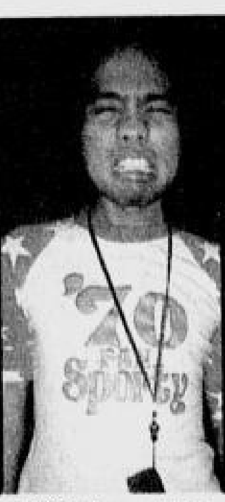
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MULA DAW NGAYON UP TO MAY NEXT YEAR IPAGBABAWAL NI ATE GLO ANG PANGANGANUPO!! PANGANGANUHO NA LANG DAW!!!
BAKIT?! ANO'NG PAGKAKAIBA NG PO SA HO?!
PAG DAW NAKAKARINIG SIYA NG PO...
PARANG IKINAKAMPANYA ANG KALABAN NYA!!!
KUMUSTA POE?! MAGANDANG GABI POE, BAYAN!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SA TINGIN KO, MAS OKEY TAYONG MAGING MAGKASOSYO SA NEGOSYO...
KESA MAGING MAGSYOTA!

THELMA Bowlen pops out.



AVID Liongoren is pretty in pink (and in anything, really).

WE wonder what Vinci from Parokya does in his spare time.

And what band are YOU from?

YAEL Yuzon of Sponge Cola. Yes, he's an Atenean. How can you tell?

GRAFFITI shirts are so last season. And no, Carlos Vilchez is not a rock star.

CHITO Miranda, the only musician sporting another band's shirt (that's Moonstar88)

Xmarks the spot

From page F1

was screamed at by a production staffer to get off.

But, hey, we do salute NU for this year's picks. Indie band 7 Ft. Junior took home the award for Video of the Year, and as always, the In the Raw Award again helped unsigned bands get exposure (congratulations to Narda!).

And although we love Parokya ni Edgar to death, we would have loved to see another band bag the "Band of the Year" honors.

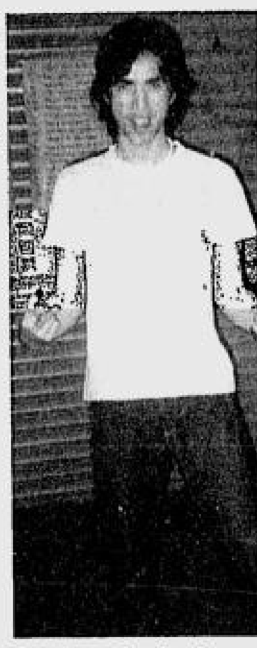
NU's greatest shot, though, was making the legendary Joey "Pepe" Smith open the show. He's the only person I know who can breeze through the National Anthem the way he did and still look cool.

MICH Dulce waving the damn thing that kept crying, "my heart goes out to Miggy Chavez"

2003 NU ROCK AWARD WINNERS

Best New Artist: Sugar Free
Band of the Year: Parokya ni Edgar
Song of the Year: "Soul Searching" by Urbandub
Album of the Year: "Sa Wakas" by Sugar Free
Best Music Video: "Daisy" by 7 Foot Jr. directed by Pedring Lopez and Kiko Po
Best Album Packaging: "Parnaso ng Payaso" by Pan/design by Ulysses Veloso
Vocalist of the Year: Kevin Roy (Razorback)
Guitarist of the Year: Ira Cruz (Kapatid)
Bassist of the Year: Rommel dela Cruz (Barbie's Cradle)
Drummer of the Year: Allan Burdeos (Kamikazee)
Producer of the Year: Barbie's Cradle and Angee Rozul for "Playing in the Fields" by Barbie's Cradle
Raw Award: Narda
Listener's Choice Award: Kamikazee
Hall of Fame Award: Eraserheads

Ebe Dancel of the Sugarfree would like to let everyone know that he will host a drinking session one day, and that even with two awards, he still can't find the guts to ask the girl he likes out.



RICO prefers basic white. We wish he kept it on during his band's performance.

ENE Lagunsad got this dress at *ukay-ukay*. "It says on the invitation 'Rock Formal,'" she says.

EVERYONE loves Mickey Mouse. Including Ely.

FRANCIS Reyes and Conrad. No, they're not brothers.

ANNETTE Ortiz of Fatal Posporos and her fishnet fetish

ODIN Fernandez (of Happy Meals) and Nix Puno (Dicta License). Rock formal, *hindi pang*-wedding.

What trap lies in wait for Frodo and Sam?

"WE can let her do it. Yes, precious, we could", says Gollum. "And the precious will be ours."

Frodo and Sam are in for a trap, while the hosts of Mordor get ready to wage war on Middle Earth in the final chapter of the epic trilogy, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King."

2bU! is challenging Tolkien fans to answer a few questions based on the popular trilogy. At stake is a couple of invites to the special advanced screening of "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King " on Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m. at Robinsons Galleria Cinema 2.

Test your Tolkien mettle with this short quiz to remind you of what's happening in Middle Earth this year!

This week's questions:

1. The Dark Lord made the Orcs in mockery of what race of free people?

2. The waybread of the Elves are called what (eaten by Sam and Frodo at the beginning of "The Two Towers")?

3. Gimli is the son of which dwarf?

Answers and winners will be announced next week.

Lawyers.com.ph, New Line Cinema and Pioneer Films in cooperation with the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER present the special advanced screening of "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King". It's also presented in part by C Interactive Digital Entertainment (exclusive Philippine distributor of "Lord of the Rings" DVDs and VCDs).

"The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" is the wildly anticipated final installment of the epic three-part film by Peter Jackson and New Line Cinema. This movie is subject to the rating by the MTRCB.

Last week's winner:

Alekos Orendain of Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Winners may claim their prizes from the Philippine Daily Inquirer building Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 3 p.m. onwards. Please look for Ruth or Pam.

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3rd Prize: LG W3000 Mobile phone

Panasonic
Two (2) winners of a Panasonic G60 Mobile phone.

Motorola
Trip for two (2) to Hawaii. Prize inclusive of round trip airfare, accommodations, pocket money and travel tax.

Alcatel
Two (2) winners of a One-Touch 535 Mobile phone.

Siemens CL50
Two (2) trips for two (2) to Hong Kong. Prize inclusive of round trip airfare, 3 days/2 nights accommodations and travel tax.

Siemens S57
Two (2) trips for two (2) to Bangkok. Prize inclusive of round trip airfare, 3 days/2 nights accommodations and travel tax.

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